A HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE KOREAN EXPERIENCE IN AMERICA

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A HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE KOREAN EXPERIENCE IN AMERICA

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ABSTRACT

Prior to 1965, only small numbers of Korean people lived in the United States, mostly in Hawaii and on the West Coast. That year, however, the immigration restriction for Asians was abolished and a mass movement of Koreans began. Soon, new ethnic communities were established in most major American cities and smaller groupings in military towns and near universities. Although the experiences of Korean immigrants to the U. S. generally have been similar to those of other recently arrived Asian groups, a strong desire to find locales for business has produced an especially wide distribution. In addition, Korean-Americans established a number of major trends for Asian-American society as a whole, including military-tied family chain migration, an emphasis on family-owned small businesses, and active student migration.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

According to the 2010 census, Minneapolis and Saint Paul are home to 16,813 Korean Americans. Finding ethnic grocery stores, churches, and black-haired Koreans themselves are not difficult there, especially in the Columbia Heights and Brooklyn Center neighborhoods. At first glance, this concentration within the Twin Cities looks like a typical Asian growth pattern that can be seen in every major city across the United States. However, this particular population boom has unusual roots. It grew from a program of adoptees.

Since the 1960s, between thirteen and fifteen thousand Korean children have been adopted by families in Minnesota, mainly in Minneapolis-Saint Paul. This number amounts to more than half of the Korean Minnesotan population and about ten percent of the 109,242 Korean children who were adopted by American families between 1953 and 2008 (Choy 2013, 177). The activism of the Children's Home Society of Minnesota and other local adoption agencies has created a significant ethnic pattern on the American landscape (Kim 2010, 21-22).

The Minneapolis-Saint Paul Korean community is unique, of course, but its story is a caution against making broad statements about any ethnic pattern. While generalizations about Korean Americans are possible, every Korean community in the U. S. has its own distinctiveness. Geographical, historical, cultural, and economic conditions varied in the Korea motherland, in the U. S., and in the larger world at the time each particular Korean-American community was built and grew actively. In fact, diversity within such communities is larger than for any other Asian immigrant group. In the 1960s, South Korea was one of the poorest countries in the world; so were its emigrants. But within the last five decades, the country has

improved its economic status tremendously (Table 1). By focusing either on individual Korean-American communities (Swiatek 2007; Zonta 2004; Kim 1998; Song 1990; Kim 1981; Givens 1974) or on Korean-American society as a whole (Choi 2007; Young 2002; Hurh 1998), past studies have discounted the place-to-place variations of these people. My historical geographical account attempts to remedy this oversight.

Country	Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per Capita		
	1965	2012	Change
South Korea	$106	$22,590	21,311%
China	$97	$6,188	6,379%
Japan	$920	$46,720	5,078%
Vietnam	$130	$1,596	1,228%
Thailand	$351	$5,480	1,561%
Philippines	$364	$2,587	711%

Table 1. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per Capita for Selected Asian Countries. Source: The World Bank.

Most of the Asian groups in the United States share much in common. Their fates are linked by overlapping cultures, of course, but also because of a change in U. S. immigration law. When the national origin quota system that had been created by the 1924 immigration law was abolished in 1965, Korean and other Asian populations in the U. S. could and did grow significantly (Park 1990). As a group, they have enjoyed considerable economic and education success.

Still, generalizations about Asian homogeneity can be taken too far. Prior to 1965, the Korean-American population was so small that the U. S. Census Bureau did not even report their populations. In contrast, Chinese-American, Japanese-American, and Filipino-American

populations all were recognized in the 1950 and 1960 censuses since, close to a century earlier, significant numbers of all three of these groups had entered the U. S. under earlier immigrant legislation. Many Chinese came to the West during the second half of the nineteenth century, for example, where they contributed to regional development as railroad construction workers, service providers, and in some cases, placer miners (Renner 1930; Chang 2010). Also, significant numbers of Japanese immigrated to Hawaii and the American West in the years just after the Exclusion Act of 1882 stopped new Chinese immigration (Patterson 1988, 1-3). Filipino immigration to the U. S., in contrast, was fairly continuous. These people were considered "nationals" of the United States, and as such, the restrictions of the 1924 immigration law did not apply to them (Rodriguez 2010, 4).

Koreans were the first Asian group to take major advantage of the 1965 U. S. immigration law. In late 1960s and 1970s, for example, they were the third-largest group entering the country. Because of their pioneer status in the post-1965 immigration, Koreans passed through the processes of adaptation and struggle earlier than Vietnamese, Indian, and other Asian groups that arrived later than them. This positioning plus the group's involvement in two violent events (the 1992 Los Angeles racial riot and the 2007 Virginia Tech University massacre) add to the distinctiveness of the Korean-American experience. A study of the group's migration, settlement pattern, and culture during the last five decades should be interesting and valuable in and of itself. It also provides useful adaption data to compare with the histories of other recent immigrant groups.

The following three chapters provide background for my study. First I briefly summarize Korean-American history to provide a general understanding of these people. Next, in chapter 3, I review the existing literature on Korean Americans, which introduces much of the material I

use in this research. The fourth chapter explains my methodology, a blend of data analysis, insights gathered from existing studies, and new material generated from field research. The remaining nine chapters present my findings and analysis. Chapter five discusses the past and present motivations that underlie Korean immigration and chapter six explores the initial settlement patterns established in the late 1960s. The other seven chapters are organized by place and tell the stories of actual Korean-Americans and their communities in last four decades using the population and economic data of the censuses, interviews, newspaper accounts, and other existing studies.

Chapter 2

Historical Background

The first Korean immigrants to the United States were a small group of politicians who came to California in 1884 after the failure of a coup d'état they led in their homeland that would have opened trade relations with Western countries (Cha 2010, 2-3). Significant immigration, however, did not start until the early 1900s during a boom in the Hawaiian sugar industry. The high demand of plantations there for cheap labor opened opportunities for many people from relatively nearby Asia. The Chinese could not come at this time because of the Exclusion Act of 1882, and so Japanese immigrants dominated these early jobs in the sugar fields (Patterson 1988, 1-3). Along with the Japanese laborers, however, came some 7,219 Koreans (over ninety percent male) (Ch'oe 2007, 13).

The Korean labor movement stopped quickly in 1905 when Japan won the Russo-Japanese War and gained control over Korea. The new government placed all Koreans abroad under control of Japanese consulates and severely limited new labor immigration to the U. S. (Choy 1979, 143). As a result, only 2,000 additional Koreans, the majority of whom were "picture brides" for the existing Korean laborers, came to Hawaii and California between 1906 and 1924. The U. S. National Origins Act of 1924 then shut down immigration completely from all Asian countries save the Philippines for a generation (Hurh 1998, 34).

The Korean War Period

Korean immigration resumed only in 1950, the year the Korean War begun. Some

17,000 nationals came to America between 1950 and 1964, most of them under the War Bride Act of 1946 (Jo 1999, 9). In contrast to the earlier, male-dominated immigration, the gender ratio in this group was about one male to 3.5 females. The majority of them were wives of U. S. servicemen and their children who did not have jobs or special skills. In addition, small numbers of Korean orphans, students, and professionals also immigrated to the U. S. under American sponsorship programs during this period (Park 1990, 8).

No visible Korean-American community was formed in 1950s and early-1960s. The war brides and their children, who dominated the group, mostly settled on or near military bases in the U. S. with no other Koreans nearby. Most of them could not speak English fluently and lacked understanding of American culture. They were dependent on their husbands, and often suffered loneliness and homesickness (Ingram 2006, 18). The several thousand Korean orphans and children who were adopted by Americans during this period were similarly dispersed. They lived with families across the U. S., although with concentrations near the locations of agencies focused on Korean adoption. These were primarily in Minnesota, Iowa, Oregon, Pennsylvania (Kim 2010, 21-22).

Post-1965 Immigration

In 1965, the national origin quota system that had been created by the 1924 immigration law was abolished. Consequently, the movement of Korean and other Asian groups to the U.S. grew dramatically (Park 1990). The Korean-American population increased from 8,570 in 1940 to 69,130 in 1970, and then to 354,593 in 1980, 798,849 in 1990, 1,228,427 in 2000, and

1,706,822 in 2010 (U. S. Census Bureau 1940, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010).[1] During the first phase of this boom, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, about one third of Korean immigrants were doctors, nurses, business managers, and other highly skilled people. The 1965 law had emphasized the admission of immigrants with specialized occupations (Yoo 1998, 67).

Among the highly skilled Korean immigrants to the U. S. in the late 1960s and early 1970s, most doctors and nurses settled near the inner-city hospitals of New York, Chicago, and other large cities. These hospitals had shortages of medical professionals as a result of Vietnam War (Ishii 1988). A large proportion of these immigrants actually had worked in other countries before coming to the U. S., especially in West Germany, Vietnam, Brazil, and Argentina. These "re-migrants" typically entered the U. S. with tourist status, and most managed to acquire permanent residency easily by using their professional skills. An example from the late 1960s was a group of several thousand Korean nurses who came to the U. S. from West Germany because the German government had expelled them during an economic recession (Kim 1981, 53-55).

By the late 1970s, settlements of Korean immigrants in large metropolitan cities had grown to a significant size. One recognition of this occurred in 1978 when the Los Angeles city council officially designated a neighborhood just west of the central business district as Koreatown (Jones-Correa 2001, 94). Similar, through smaller Korean communities existed in New York, Washington, D. C., Chicago, Atlanta, and other major cities across the U. S. by the 1980s (Ember 2004, 996-997).

[1] The U. S. Census Bureau did not report the Korean American population in 1950 and 1960.

A significant portion of the Korean-American families in the 1980s and 1990s owned small businesses. According to the 1990 census, for example, twenty-six percent were self-employed, the highest number among all ethnic groups recorded (Min 1998, 238). In their shops, the immigrants worked long hours and most of them utilized family members as labor to reduce expenses. Through such efforts, many Korean Americans became successful (Light and Bonacich 1988, 365). Tensions accompanied such expansion, of course, especially with African-American neighbors. The bigger the Korean population, the larger these tensions tended to be, with Los Angeles and New York leading the way. Several anti-Korean demonstrations and Korean store boycotts have broken out since 1980s. The biggest, in 1992, was a racial riot in Los Angeles that effectively destroyed Koreatown. Businesses there never fully recovered (Kim 1999).

The Koreatown event changed the political mindset of nearly all Korean Americans. Prior to the riot, the majority of these people (like most immigrant groups) supported the Democratic Party. The group then turned politically conservative. A 1992 survey shows that 49.4 percent of Korean Americans favored the Republican Party while Democratic and Independent partisans were only 30.4 and 19.0 respectfully (Gall and Gall 1993, 25). Also, this fact can be demonstrated by the affiliations of recent politicians. Jay Kim, the first Korean American in the U. S. House of Representatives (1993-1999), was a Republican, and so were the only two Koreans to serve in state houses of representatives in Washington and Oregon. In contrast, the only Korean-American Democrat of note was a candidate for state representative in Hawaii in 1992 (Kivisto and Rundblad 2000, 75-76).

Since 1992, no additional riots have threatened Korean-American society, and relationships between Koreans and others gradually grew more peaceful and accommodating.

The old tensions revived in 2007, however, with the massacre of several students at Virginia Tech University. The shooter was a Korean American. Korean Americans throughout the country, especially the large group in nearby Fairfax Country Virginia, worried about repercussions. The event was interpreted as a wakeup call for a community that had perhaps created too much internal stress for itself through a relentless emphasis on education and economic success (Young 2012, 84).

Chapter 3

Literature Review

Although most people may have a general sense that Korean Americans are concentrated on the West Coast, almost no geographical study has been done on the large, post-1965 migration and its detailed settlement patterns at the national and regional levels. A partial exception is a broadly based comparative examination of Korean, Filipino, and Chinese settlement (Mangiafico 1988), and a similar study has explored the migration pattern of all Asian Americans collectively for the 1995-2000 period (Bao 2010). Most of the existing geographical studies on Korean Americans have been done at the local level, particularly on the major cities of Los Angeles; New York; Chicago; Washington, D. C.; Detroit; and Seattle (Swiatek 2007; Zonta 2004; Kim 1998; Song 1990; Kim 1981; Givens 1974). In addition, several studies exist on urban multiethnic neighborhoods that include Korean settlements (Matsumoto 2012; Kang 2006; Michaels 2000).

History

In contrast to the scarcity of geographical studies about Korean Americans, the history of these people has been studied relatively well at both the national and the local levels. Two of the best countrywide studies are written in Korean. First, Eui-Young Yu's *100-Year History of Korean Immigration to the United States* (2002) examines not only the national level, but also the histories of local Korean communities in Los Angeles; New York; Chicago; Washington, D. C.; San Francisco; Atlanta; Seattle; and New England. The other study is the Christian Herald's *The Centennial History of the Korean American Community* (2007). It is a less formal work, and

consists of six volumes containing hundreds of photographs and stories about Korean Americans and their Christian community.

Several books explore the history of local Korean communities in the U. S. Among the most outstanding of these are the Korean American History Publishing Committee's *The History of Korean Immigration in Chicago* (2012) and Jeon Lee's *The History of Korean Immigration in Atlanta* (2002). The histories of Koreans in Hawaii and California prior to 1965 also have been explored several times (Cha 2010; Ch'oe 2007; Patterson 2000; Son 1989; Patterson 1988).

Life-Story Interviews, Studies, and Literature

In addition to standard academic sources, several popular books and magazines also offer economic and cultural insights through interviews with Korean Americans. One of the best volumes I have found is Elaine H. Kim and Eui-Young Yu's *East to America* (1996). It contains thirty-eight interviews with Koreans from different backgrounds, occupations, and personalities. In addition, numerous Korean American life stories and experiences have appeared in newspapers such as *The Korea Times* and *The Korea Daily*, and in Korean-American magazines, such as *KoreAm*. *KoreAm* is not only the most popular magazine for this immigrant group, but it also serves as a major political forum for the people. It and the two newspapers noted are all searchable electronically.

A clear change in Korean-American life-story studies exists before and after the year 2000. Most accounts published prior to this year tell about cultural assimilation (Min 1998; Kim 1991; Hurh, Kim, and Kim 1978; Lee 1975). In contrast, recent studies focus on the life

experiences of Korean Americans who are naturalized and grew up in the U. S. (Choi 2007; Kim 2004; Hurh 1998; Kim 1997).

Furthermore, a growing body of Korean-American literature tells stories of immigrant struggles. Yon-Hong Ch'oe and Haeng-Ja Kim's compendium, *Surfacing Sadness* (2003), analyzes the major poems, essays, and short stories written during the early years of Korean immigration. This literature mostly shows the experiences of new immigrants. Several recent novels also exist. One of the most popular is Nami Mun's *Miles from Nowhere* (2009), which tells the story of a runaway immigrant teenager who lived in Bronx in the 1980s. Chang-Rae Lee's *Native Speaker* (1995) tells a more positive story. In this book, a Korean man tries his best to assimilate into American society even though he feels a sense of cultural alienation. Many other Korean-American novelists have published in recent years. However, the majority of them tend not to focus on ethnic issues.

Families and Youths

Most recent Koreans immigrants are young couples and their children, and this fact has prompted several academic studies about family life. Young Lee Hertig's *Cultural Tug of War* (2001), for example, examines the dependency of such families on churches for emotional support and because of language issues. At the same time, it discusses the family problems caused when Korean children learn English much more quickly than do their parents.

Several studies focus on Korean youths as well. Nazli Kibria's *Becoming Asian American: Second-Generation Chinese and Korean American Identities* (2002) discusses the daily lives of youths in college, at work, and in marriage. Furthermore, Rebecca Y. Kim's

"Made in the U.S.A." (2004) explains the noticeably high religious participation of young Korean Americans and its effects, while Sara Lee's "Marriage Dilemmas" (2004) explains the major factors that Korean American youths consider when they choose marriage partners.

In addition, a few studies exist on the issues that Korean youths face at school. Yasmine L. Ziesler's "Becoming Korean and American" (2004) examines how Korean preschool children socialize with others, while Lea Lee's "Buckets of Tears" (2002) tells the story of challenges and successes of a Korean second-grader. Jamie Lew's *Asian Americans in Class* (2006) contrasts overachieving and underachieving Korean-American students in secondary school. Finally, Nancy Abelmann's *The Intimate University* (2009) analyzes the causes of segregation issue of Korean-American college students.

Women

One of the most compelling stories about Korean Americans is Mary Paik Lee's *Quiet Odyssey* (1990). This tells about a woman who came to Hawaii in 1905 at age five and lived there and in California for over eighty years. Her memory is rich, and the changes she discusses profound. Another famous study is Young I. Song and Ailee Moon's *Korean American Women* (1998), which explores the transition of traditional Korean wives into Americanized modern women. In addition, Jenny Hyun Chung Pak's *Korean American Women* (2006) shows how Korean women have changed themselves to fit their new lives in America using three case studies.

In addition, several studies have been done on the Korean war brides who came to the U. S. in the 1950s. First, Ji-Yeon Yuh's *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown* (2002) tells general life

stories of these women. More detail occurs in Grace M. Cho's *Haunting the Korean Diaspora* (2008), including a discussion of "Yanggongju," a term that refers the sadness that often accompanied these women's lives. Furthermore, Korean military brides in Kansas have been studied recently by Sang Jo Kim (2012).

Ethnic Identity and Other Socio-Economic Issues

Korean Americans, like other recent immigrant groups, still struggle to find their identity. S. Sonya Gwak's *Be(com)ing Korean in the United States* (1990) analyzes this issue in general terms, while Dani I. Meier's *Loss and Reclaimed Lives* (1998) and Eleana J. Kim's *Adopted Territory* (2010) talk about the particular case of Korean children who were adopted and raised in American families since the Korean War. Furthermore, three books discuss the identity of Korean-American college students (Jo 2004; Ahn 1999; Oh 1997) and two others talk about the issue for multiethnic Asian Americans (Murphy-Shigematsu 2012; Lott 1998).

Identity issues are partially expressed through politics. Angie Y. Chung's *Legacies of Struggle* (2007) clearly explores how conflicts of interest between different organizations within the Korean community are reflected in voting behavior. Although Chung appears to be the only study devoted exclusively to Korean-American politics, several books discuss the subject in the context of Asian Americans in general (Ling 2008; McFerson 2006; Min 2006; Võ 2004; Nakanishi and Lai 2003; Zhan 2003; Chang 2001; Kitano and Daniels 2001; Hirabayashi 1998).

Relationships with neighbors is a common political issue for all ethnic groups. Most such studies that involve Koreans focus on their conflicts with African Americans. Andrew Sung Park's *Racial Conflict and Healing* (1996) is a general treatment of the issue that discusses

solutions using social theory. Kwang Chung Kim's *Korean in the Hood* (1999), in contrast, explores Korean-Black tensions in three cities: Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago. In addition, Min H. Song's *Strange Future* (2005) discusses the 1992 Los Angeles racial riot and predicts the future relationship between the two groups. A few other books talk about urban ethnic relationships and tensions in general using Koreans as a main example (McFerson 2006; Johes-Correa 2001).

Economics has without doubt been the biggest cause of tension between Korean Americans and African Americans, particularly the general success of Korean small business owners in the cities. Sae-Jae Lee's *Immigrant Occupational Choice* (1995) discusses how Korean immigrants made career choices and why many of them chose to become self-employed. Jin-Kyung Yoo's *Korean Immigrant Entrepreneurs* (1998) explains the unique characteristics of this particular business network and the relationships of owners within the ethnic society, while John S. Butler and George Kozmetsky's *Immigrant and Minority Entrepreneurship* (2004) explores similar issues in a comparative context with other recent immigrant groups. In addition, several case studies have been done on the Korean businesses at local level (Xu 2011; Fernald 2010; Gallardo 2000; Kim 1998; Kwon 1997; Park 1997; Kwon 1994).

Theories of Migration and Ethnicity

Theoretical issues about migration and the nature of ethnicity necessarily underlie any study such as mine. Several classic studies have been written on the nature of migration. E. G. Ravenstein's "The Laws of Migration" (1889) was the first to discuss push and pull factors as motivations for mass movement. More recently, Everett S. Lee's "A Theory of Migration"

(1966) presented a good overview of the subject, writing about definitions, factors in the process, the volume and stream of migration, and the characteristics of migrants. Geographer Curtis C. Roseman's "Migration as a Spatial and Temporal Process" (1971) compares the total and partial "daily" displacement of migrations, while W. A. V. Clark's *Human Migration* (1985) uses three decades of migration patterns in the world to examine migration within cities, across regions, and between countries. Several recent books add further perspective (Portes and DeWind 2007; Meilaender 2001; Brettell and Hollifield 2000; Cohen 1996; Stolt and Benson 1986).

Ethnicity has been heavily theorized. Nathan Glazer's *Ethnicity* (1975) is a classic study, sixteen essays that present theoretical exploration of modern ethnic identity and selective empirical studies of ethnic groups and conflicts around the world. Ronald A. Reminick's *Theory of Ethnicity* (1983) examines ethnicity from an anthropologic perspective. He defines the major concepts of the field, explains the functional dynamics of ethnicity (e.g. forces of assimilation, models of ethnic identity change), and explores the causes and functions of ethnicity. John Rex and David Mason's *Theories of Race and Ethnic Relations* (1986) examines many of the same questions as does Reminick, but from a sociological perspective using fourteen case studies. In addition, Paul R. Brass's *Ethnicity and Nationalism* (1991) offers an extensive study of historical and political processes at work in multiethnic societies, especially India. Gary Craig's *Understanding 'Race' and Ethnicity* (2012) is the most recent major study on the subject.

Chapter 4

Methodology

The term Korean Americans as used in everyday discussions designates U. S. citizens who possess full or partial Korean heritage. The majority of them are first-generation immigrants. The 2010 federal census, for example, listed 1,100,422 out of 1,706,822 Korean Americans as foreign born.[2] Most of these people then acquired U. S. citizen status by going through the process of naturalization. Their children, of course, became U. S. citizens by being born in this country (The Department of Homeland Security, U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2014).

For this dissertation study I wanted ideally to include every American who has even a little bit of Korean heritage, and not be limited by birthplaces or legal status. Every generation of Korean Americans would be included. Although the employment of this definition is possible in theory, finding the needed numerical data would be very hard indeed.

The 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010 census forms list Koreans as a racial category, and thereby are supposed to include all Koreans or part Koreans regardless of their legal status, citizenship category, or classification as a first-, second-, or third-generation immigrant. Thus, the censuses make an effort to count and include not only U. S. citizens of Korean birth but also legal aliens such as permanent residents and legal foreign students in U. S. territory. They also register U. S.-born children of earlier immigrants. Although the data for all these various subsets can be analyzed separately in most cases, the combined total for citizens and aliens, first and second generations, is the basic format (The Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census,

[2] Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_ACS1, IJQ.

September 2002). And, this lump categorization was most appropriate for my research as well, because I sought to be inclusive. Especially in the case of my university town study in chapter 12, including the data on the foreign population helps in figuring out patterns of the Korean national students.

The raw census data were derived from personal information provided by the Koreans themselves. In 1970, Korean for the first time was included as a possible race category that a person could select, and so the past five censuses all contain totals for this particular population. Until 1990, however, the census sheets allowed a person to select only a single racial/ethnic category, and therefore people with multiethnic backgrounds had problems in knowing how best to respond. Partial Koreans who are listed in the Korean category for these years are not problematic for me in my work. Error occurs, however, whenever a partial Korean chose to list himself or herself in one of their other ethnic categories and not the Korean one. Fortunately for me, evidence suggests that the number of mixed-race Korean Americans was small during the 1970-1990 period. The issue of single ethnic categories finally was solved for the year 2000 when census officials included for the first time multiethnic categories for Asian ethnic groups.

A second problem with the census data for Korean Americans involves illegal migration. The estimated numbers of illegal Koreans in the U. S. varies, but a common guess is that it is at least twenty percent (Song and Moon, 1998: 47 and Minkin 2007, 250). However, the number seems low than actual number. It is common knowledge that a large portion of the foreign-born people in the U. S., perhaps even a majority, arrived as illegal aliens. To prevent deportation, these immigrants did not report themselves to authorities and tried hard to avoid census takers. They even adopted false names in some cases. In this way, the population of Koreans in America, as well as that of other recent immigrant groups is understated.

Still a third data issue in any assessment of Korean Americans concerns their strong association with small business. Partly out of ignorance of proper procedures and partly as a way simply to increase profits, most store owners in the past underreported their earnings and therefore the amounts owed in sales and income taxes. This practice increased profits, of course, and it also was easy for them to hide the truth since most of their customers paid in cash. Many employees of such businesses also received their wages in cash, and illegal immigrants obviously filed no tax returns at all. The above set of practices means that the actual size of the Korean-American economy (and ones of other immigrant communities as well) does not conform well with census data. In fact, I suspect that most such economic data is understated severely. One should keep this basic reality in mind when reading all the tables presented throughout this dissertation.

To understand the Korean-American experience, one necessarily must grapple with the life of these people before coming to the U. S. as well as the conditions they faced as newly arrived immigrants and then, later, as official Americans. At the same time, attention must be paid to variations that exist within the Korean-American society. Not all immigrants came for the same reason, for example, and they settled in vastly different places.

Perhaps the single most valuable resource for this study beyond census statistics is an extensive trove of Korean American life stories. First of all, over a million Korean Americans exist. Although they still are a minority group in America, their size is not really small. Along with numerous academic studies by historians, sociologists, economists, and political scientists, personal stories of Korean Americans also are common. Many of these exist in books, magazines, and newspapers, and now increasingly online as well via personal websites and blogs. The stories cover all different types of Korean immigrants and times of arrival. Their

volume is sufficient, in fact, to have made my personal interviewing of people largely unnecessary. Since my goal is to study the general settlement trends of this quite sizeable group of people at the national scale and over relatively long period of time, it made sense to utilize these abundance existing memoirs instead of relying only on limited personal interviews.

Since this is a study in historical geography, my research features many time-series maps of Korean Americans at national, regional, and local scales. A large majority of these graphics come from data compiled by the U. S. Census Bureau via the National Historical Geographic Information System (NHGIS) and various Korean business directories in the U. S. In the case of a flow map of Korean immigration to the U. S., foreign-visitor data compiled by the U. S. Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Services and historical flight schedules of airlines are used as main sources of information.

The National Historical Geographic Information System (NHGIS) provides census data in table format, and I converted much of this information into maps using the software ArcMap. Most standard census data for Korean Americans such as age, gender, income, literacy, occupation, and population are available for counties and census tracts as well as at national and state levels, and so the patterns can be examined at different geographical scales. I used many of the census data tables directly in this research as well.

To add meaning to the census facts, I make full use of the previous geographical and other studies of Korean-American cultural and economic conditions that I discussed in the literature review section. These works include newspaper and magazine articles plus the interviews and personal stories discussed above. Among the newspapers, two major Korean-American publications are especially valuable as they focus on issues especially relevant to the

ethnic community. The *Korea Times* was founded in Los Angeles in 1969 and currently is published in nine different U. S. cities. The *Korea Daily*, also started in Los Angeles, began in 1974 and is now published in nine different locations. Both newspapers are searchable at their respective websites. At the same time, I also made frequent use of local newspaper articles that deal with specific Korean populations. Other particularly useful sources were the online sites *I Am Korean American* and *The Half Korean*. Also, personal stories from various online blogs and sites helped to enrich the humanistic side of this research.

Because photographs sometimes can be more effective than words in conveying a sense of place or time, I made a concerted effort to find and make use of this data source. Major online archives exist from the Los Angeles Public Library, the San Francisco Public Library, and the University of Southern California Library. I also found useful images at other online sites, especially account holders at the website flickr.com.

Chapter 5

Motivation and Migration

The post-1965 Korean immigration to the U. S. is a good example of the traditional push-pull migration theory first discussed in E. G. Ravenstein's "The Laws of Migration" (1889). Mass movement occurred at that time partly because the South Korea government initiated an immigration program as a way to reduce its population and thereby to improve economic and social conditions (Kim 1981, 48-54). Simultaneously, however, the liberal John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson administrations in the U. S. helped to direct this flow of people by abolishing the national origin quota system that had been in effect since the Immigration Act of 1924 (LeMay and Barkan 1999, 251-263).

The Push Factor

The end of Korean War (1950-1953) brought a baby boom to the Korean Peninsula similar to the one that happened in the U. S. and European countries after World War II. This period for South Korea lasted from the middle 1950s until the middle 1960s. The reason was because Koreans had been repressed for a long time, including both the periods of Japanese colonial rule (1910-1945) and the Korean War (1950-1953). During these hard times, many Koreans gave up on the idea of having families, and the ones who did get married did not have many children (Repetto 1981, 23).

However, after the Korean War, not only did people in their late teens and twenties marry, but also older people who previously had been single. All these had more children. In

addition to this trend, improved medical technology after the war led to a sharp decline in the country's previously high mortality rate (Table 2). This combination of high birth rate and lowered death rates produced a surge in the country's young (and aged) populations as compared to a relative stagnancy in the size of the working-age group. As a result, South Korea's economy struggled continuously throughout the 1950s and most of the 1960s (Cho 1994, 13).

The U. S. and other Western countries sent aid to South Korea at this time, mostly food and relief supplies. Such aid did not contribute to capital formation, however, or to the reconstruction of basic infrastructure such as power plants, dams, and embankments. So it took some time for the country's economy to improve. In fact, South Korea was poorer than North Korea for two decades after the war (Cho 1994, 13-14). Until the early 1970s, it remained one of the poorest countries in the world (Table 3). With the lack of necessary facilities, the Korean people were continuously victimized by natural disasters such as typhoons, floods, winter storms, and droughts. Many lives were lost. One particular flood hit Seoul in September, 1964, killing at least 190 people with 200 more missing (Photo 1).

Year	Birth Rate	Death Rate
1940-1945	42.0	23.0
1945-1950	42.0	23.0
1950-1955	40.0	33.0
1955-1960	44.7	16.1
1960-1965	41.7	14.9
1965-1970	32.0	12.8

Table 2. Birth Rate and Death Rate (per Thousand People) in South Korea by Year. Source: Kim 1994.

Country	Year					
	1962	1964	1966	1968	1970	1972
South Korea	104	121	130	195	279	323
United States	3,108	3,423	3,972	4,491	4,998	5,836
Japan	634	836	1,059	1,451	1,974	2,875
China	70	84	103	90	112	130
Philippines	158	178	202	227	189	214

Table 3. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Dollars per Capita for Selected Countries between 1960 and 1970. Source: The World Bank.

Photo 1. A Family in Seoul Looking at the Wreckage of their Home after a Flood in September, 1964. Source: Associated Press Wirephoto, f21325rca (used with permission).

Although the Korean economy and infrastructure gradually improved over the postwar years, the country's politics deteriorated. The trouble began with Syngman Rhee, the first South Korea president (1948-1960), who was extremely self-righteous. He disregarded the national assembly and yet was incompetent to lead on his own. His administration also was extremely corrupt. Foreign aid that should have been distributed to the people often went instead into the pockets of government officials. Gradually, the general public turned their backs on him.

Wounded Korean war veterans who had been promised but then denied government subsidies, for example, organized demonstrations (Kleiner 2011, 100-117 and Photo 2).

Photo 2. Some Six Hundred Wounded Korean War Veterans Demonstrate for Increasing Government Subsidies in February, 1961. Source: United Press International Photo (used with permission).

As corruption became more apparent and the economy improved only marginally, people got frustrated, which that led to problems at the family level. Many individuals, in fact, made the decision to leave their country. James Park, who was born in a small Korean village in 1942 and came to Los Angeles as a student in 1969, recalled that his father abandoned his wife and children when he could not make enough income. The shame of this abandonment, in turn, caused his mother's death. Although James's life in Korea was rough, he studied hard, entered Seoul National University, and got a decent job in a sweater-exporting company. However, after his older brother became paralyzed, he came to the U. S. to escape the continuing problems (Kim and Yu 1996, 274-281).

Family crises made people abandon children as well. Seeing orphans in the streets was not uncommon in Korea in the 1960s and 1970s (Photo 3). In fact, from the 1950s until even the 1980s, Korea was a major exporter of orphans (Kim 2010, 22-26 and Table 4). Elizabeth Kim's story is one of the most brutal and bizarre. She was the daughter of a Korean peasant woman and an American soldier. Because of the prejudice in rural Korea at that time (in the 1950s), marrying a foreigner was perceived as an extreme sin. She remembers her mother regularly being pelted with stones on the way home from a rice field and the day when her grandfather and uncle actually killed her mother as punishment for her dishonor. After this, Kim was dumped into an orphanage in Seoul before luckily being adopted by an American family (Kim 2000, 4-42).

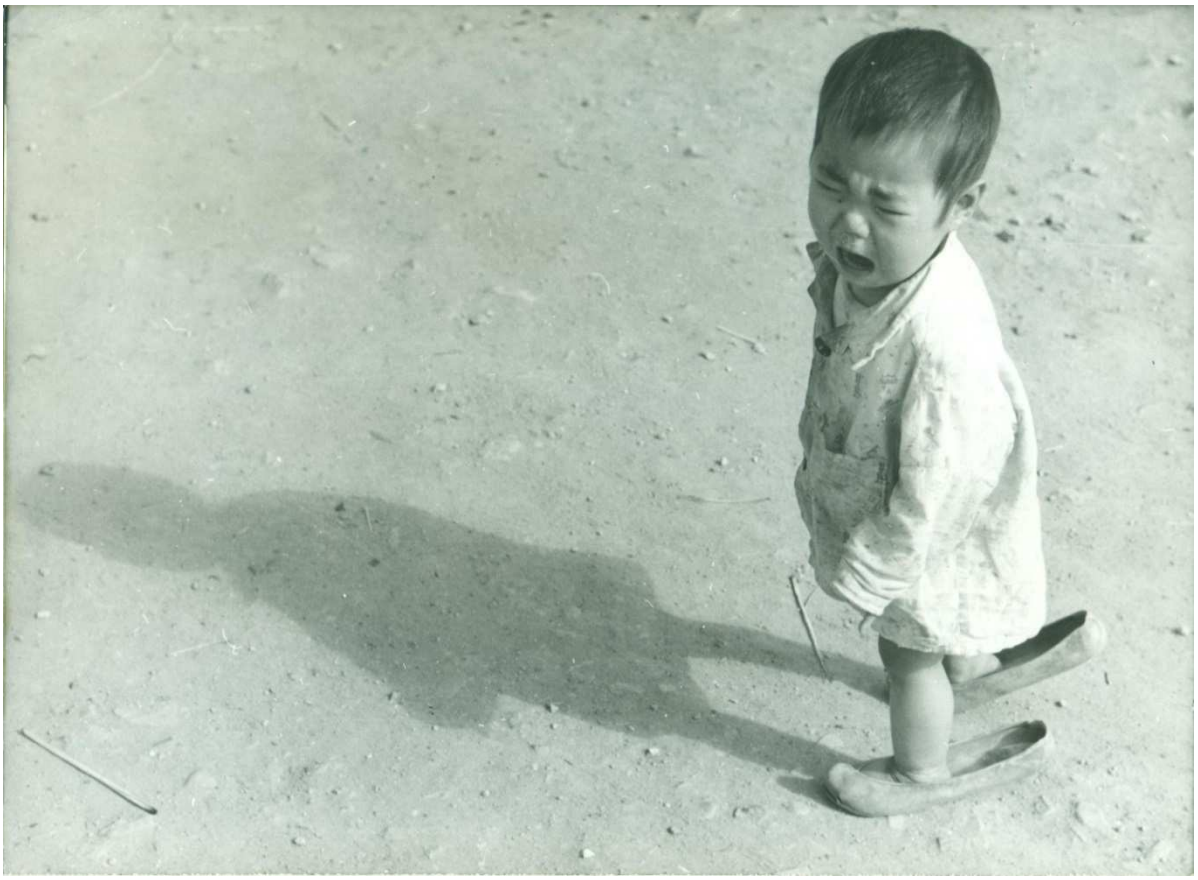


Photo 3. A Little Boy in Busan Wakes Up to Realize His Mother Left Him Alone in April, 1967. Source: Keystone Press Agency, 3/169/64946 (used with permission).

Year	Number	Year	Number	Year	Number
1953	4	1963	442	1973	4,688
1954	8	1964	462	1974	5,302
1955	59	1965	451	1975	5,077
1956	671	1966	494	1976	6,597
1957	486	1967	626	1977	6,159
1958	930	1968	949	1978	5,917
1959	741	1969	1,190	1979	4,148
1960	638	1970	1,932	1980	4,144
1961	660	1971	2,725	1981	4,628
1962	254	1972	3,490	1982	6,434

Table 4. International Korean Orphan Adoptions by Year. Source: Bergquist 2013, 8.

Finally, in 1960, students and regular citizens staged what came to be known as the April Revolution and Syngman Rhee stepped down from the presidency (Photo 4). Power did not go the opposition party, however. Instead, the government was seized in a military coup led by General Chung Hee Park on May 16, 1961. Park named himself chairman of the Supreme Council for National Reconstruction as soon as the coup succeeded. Although he officially did not become president until December 17, 1963, he nevertheless was in charge of the Korean government since the time of the coup (Kim and Vogel, 2011, 35).

No matter how he got the power, Chung Hee Park radically changed the fate of his country by establishing firm economic and political plans. One of these involved the exportation of people. After recognizing the problem of overpopulation, his government negotiated with several foreign governments in 1962 to arrange for group labor immigrations. Only a few countries were interested at the time, but Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, and Paraguay agreed to take some 30,000 agricultural workers while West Germany accepted about 17,000 nurses and

miners. The West German experiment was short-lived, however, and that government expelled the Koreans as soon as German economy faced recession (Kim 1981, 48-54).

Photo 4. Korean Students Gather in Seoul to Celebrate the Second Anniversary of the Uprising that Toppled Syngman Rhee's Government, April 26, 1962. Source: United Press International Photo (used with permission).

The Pull Factor

While the United States was never a part of General Park's negotiations because of its long-standing quota system that virtually excluded Asian immigrants, American attitudes were changing. In 1958, Senator John F. Kennedy wrote *A Nation of Immigrants*, in which he made obvious his favorable attitude toward a new and more open immigration policy. This idea became part of his platform as a presidential candidate, and in 1963, during the last year of his presidency, Kennedy submitted a new immigration bill to Congress that abolished the national-origin quota system. Democrats traditionally had favored such reform, but Kennedy hoped that

the idea might find more general support because of U. S. economic growth at this time. Eventually, even organized labor came to favor the policy.

Though popular, immigration reform stood behind civil rights in the political agenda of Kennedy's successor, Lyndon B. Johnson. As soon as Congress passed the Civil Rights Act in 1964, however, immigration became the next hot topic. Senator Edward Kennedy, the president's younger brother, led the campaign. He argued that the ethnic-based quota system created in 1924 was "un-American" and should be liberalized. A year later, Congress passed the new immigration bill. It was signed by Lyndon B. Johnson at the foot of the Statue of Liberty on October 3, 1965 (LeMay and Barkan 1999, 251-263 and Photo 5).

Photo 5. President Lyndon B. Johnson Delivers a Speech before Signing the Immigration Act on Liberty Island, October 3, 1965. Source: LBJ Presidential Library C666-16A-WH65 (Public Domain).

South Koreans were among the most enthusiastic observers of the American debate over immigration. Because of U. S. economic support during and after the Korean War, the people's views toward the U. S. had become very positive (Photo 6). Once the new immigration law became active, a major influx began. Whereas the number of Koreans immigrants to the U. S. between 1951 and 1965 had totaled only 17,204, the number now surged. Some 2,492 immigrants arrived in 1966, 14,297 in 1971 and 30,803 in 1976 (Park 1990, 7).

Photo 6. President Lyndon B. Johnson Is Greeted by a Big Crowd in Seoul, Korea, October 31, 1966. Source: LBJ Presidential Library 3750-37 (Public Domain).

Preferences in the initial Immigration Act of 1965 focused on families more than economics. In fact, four of the six preferences stated in the act involved kinship (Steiner 2009, 25), whereas only two related to occupation (Table 5).

Preferences	Candidates
Exempt	Spouses, unmarried minor children and parents of U.S. citizens
First	Unmarried adult children of U. S. citizens
Second	Spouses and unmarried adult children of permanent resident aliens
Third	Professions, scientists, and artists of exceptional ability
Fourth	Married children of U. S. citizens
Fifth	Brothers and sisters of U. S. citizens over age 21
Sixth	Skilled and unskilled workers in occupations that are in short supply

Table 5. Immigration Preferences of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. Source: The Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service 1966, Table 7A.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, about two-thirds of all immigrants admitted to the U. S. came via family connections, mostly using the "Exempt" category in Table 5 (Steiner 2009, 25). This percentage was even higher for Koreans (Table 6). Among the employment-based categories, the preference for highly skilled professional immigrants produced greater numbers than that for lower-skilled workers.

Preference		Population by Year					Percentage by Year				
		1966	**1967**	**1968**	**1969**	**1970**	**1966**	**1967**	**1968**	**1969**	**1970**
Family-Based Immigration	Exempt	2,183	2,255	2,264	3,719	5,970	87.6%	57.0%	59.4%	61.5%	64.1%
	First	11	7	5	7	16	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
	Second	51	219	289	517	816	2.0%	5.5%	7.6%	8.6%	8.8%
	Fourth	0	28	21	7	33	0.0%	0.7%	0.5%	0.1%	0.3%
	Fifth	4	169	175	534	1,326	0.2%	4.3%	4.6%	8.8%	14.2%
	Total	**2,249**	**2,678**	**2,754**	**4,784**	**8,161**	**90.2%**	**67.7%**	**72.2%**	**79.1%**	**87.6%**
Employment-Based Immigration	Third	228	1,064	639	520	468	9.2%	26.9%	16.8%	8.6%	5.0%
	Sixth	15	214	418	741	685	0.6%	5.4%	11.0%	12.3%	7.4%
	Total	**243**	**1,278**	**1,057**	**1,261**	**1,153**	**9.8%**	**32.3%**	**27.8%**	**20.9%**	**12.4%**
Total		**2,492**	**3,956**	**3,811**	**6,045**	**9,314**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Table 6. Numbers and Percentages of Korean Immigrants Admitted to the U. S. in 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, and 1970 by the 1965 Immigration Act Preferences. Source: The Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, and 1970, Table 7A.

As a result of the emphasis on family-related migration, more Korean women than men came to the U. S. in the late 1960s (Table 7). This imbalance was most significant for the age group between 20 and 29, and was produced by young brides of U. S. servicemen (Kim 1981, 33). Unlike the somewhat negative image of other Asian military brides from this period, most of the Koreans were women from respected families who worked in U. S. military facilities as regular workers. Bai Juhyun, a typist at a base in Korea in the 1960s, is a good example. She married an American military officer in 1968 and became Mrs. Weinberg before immigrating to the U. S. in February, 1969. Although her social background was exemplary, her husband's parents initially did not approve of her as a daughter-in-law. Her own parents were not happy either, and she recalled that such reactions were common for most interracial couples of that period (Yuh 2002, 55-58).

Age	Population		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
0-9	1,911	3,077	24.4%	17.3%
10-19	928	1,532	11.8%	8.6%
20-29	1,605	8,891	20.5%	50.0%
30-39	2,700	3,345	34.4%	18.8%
40-49	474	454	6.0%	2.6%
50-59	141	259	1.8%	1.5%
60-69	70	171	0.9%	1.0%
70-79	15	36	0.2%	0.2%
80+	2	7	0.0%	0.0%
Total	7,846	17,772	100.0%	100.0%

Table 7. Numbers and Percentages of Korean Immigrants Admitted to the U. S. between 1966 and 1970 by Age and Sex. Source: The Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, and 1970, Table 9.

The larger numbers of female (versus male) children in the immigrant list reflects a similar gender ratio in orphan adoptions by American families in 1960s. This discrepancy grew from discriminations in the contemporary Korean society where families valued sons more than daughters (Kim 2010, 35). Janine Bishop was one such girl adopted in the 1960s when she was fourteen months old by an American family in Fresno, California. Like many other adopted children, she has no memory of her Korean family, but heard that she was sent to an adoption agency when her parents struggled to feed their two children. They kept her brother and decided to send her away. Although her early story is sad, she overcame these feelings. She learned the Korean language and culture, and then visited a Korean adoption agency to learn more about the process and to meet children who were in same situation she experienced earlier (Kim and Yu 1996, 306-313).

According to the 1965 law, the best way for anybody who did not have American relatives to immigrate to the U. S. was to obtain professional skills (Min 2006, 14). However, acquiring such expertise was not easy for average Koreans of the time because most of them were still minimally educated farmers. As a result, a big portion of early Korean immigrants were urbanites, the only group that had the needed skills (Table 8). Still, even though these people were well educated and from cities, their lives in Korea were not like those of middle-class citizens in the U. S. and European countries. South Korea remained very poor in the 1960s and so standards and expectations were correspondingly low (Park 1990, 8). Nevertheless, with General Park's immigration program in place, including government-supported employment agencies, skilled immigration candidates could at least make contact with American employers (Kim 1981, 25).

Occupation Group	Population by Year					Percentage by Year				
	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
Professional and Technical Workers	349	830	716	1,081	1,613	14.0%	21.0%	18.8%	17.9%	17.3%
Managers and Officials	17	36	43	83	117	0.7%	0.9%	1.1%	1.4%	1.3%
Office Workers	39	74	64	125	155	1.5%	1.9%	1.7%	2.1%	1.7%
Craftsman and Foremen	5	12	32	52	199	0.2%	0.3%	0.8%	0.9%	2.1%
Operative and Kindred Workers	6	24	25	48	71	0.2%	0.6%	0.7%	0.8%	0.8%
Service Workers	19	54	51	93	89	0.8%	1.4%	1.3%	1.5%	0.9%
Sales Workers	5	11	10	14	19	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%
Laborers	4	4	8	14	22	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Farmers and Farm Laborers	0	5	1	7	5	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Private Household Workers	2	25	50	123	70	0.1%	0.6%	1.3%	2.0%	0.7%
Total Occupation	**446**	**1,075**	**1,000**	**1,640**	**2,360**	**17.9%**	**27.2%**	**26.2%**	**27.1%**	**25.3%**
Wives, children, and without job	**2,046**	**2,881**	**2,811**	**4,405**	**6,954**	**82.1%**	**72.8%**	**73.8%**	**72.9%**	**74.7%**
Total	2,492	3,956	3,811	6,045	9,314	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 8. Numbers of Korean Immigrants Admitted to the U. S. in 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, and 1970 by Occupation Group. Source: The Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, and 1970, Table 8.

Among the skilled professions, health-care workers were in highest demand because many inner-city hospitals in America were experiencing shortages of doctors, dentists, nurses, and pharmacists. Fortuitously, South Korea had an oversupply of such people. They were eager

to work, and the higher wages and better living in the U. S. attracted many. In fact, Koreans ranked second only to Filipinos in numbers of foreign health-care professionals in the U. S. during this period (Miyares and Airriess 2006, 239-240). These particular Koreans concentrated heavily in New York City and the Mid-Atlantic states. For example, in 1976, 20.3 percent of Korean medical doctors in the U. S. worked in New York City public hospitals and more than fifty percent worked in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. California, in contrast, had only 3.4 percent of the Korean American doctors (Kim 1981, 156-157). As I will detail on the following pages, this pattern can be explained by Korean immigration via West Germany.

Among the early Korean health professionals in the U. S., the most famous was Boon Ja Lee. Known as a godmother of Korean-American nurses, she was born in a rural town in Chungcheong Province in 1935. She went to nursing school in the 1950s and worked as Registered Nurse (RN) in a U. S. military hospital from 1956 to 1967. While there, she learned English well and found an American willing to sponsor her for a job in Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas. She worked in that hospital only three years, but stayed on in the U. S. and founded the Korean-American Nurse Association and other professional associations. By doing so, she helped more than a thousand Korean medical people to come and remain in the U. S. over the years (Lee 2007).

Another well-known Korean-American immigrant who came as a nurse is Ja Won Kim. She worked initially in West Germany and then in New York in the 1970s. Kim became famous for her autobiography, an insightful portrait of life in Korea, West Germany, and the U. S. (Kim 2002).

Migration

The big Korean migration to the U. S., unlike movements from Europe and Africa in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, came almost entirely by air. The civil aviation industry first blossomed in the late 1940s and grew even more in the 1950s as jet engines replaced propellers on commercial planes (Rhoades 2008, 59-60). The British Overseas Airways Corporation operated the first commercial jet plane in 1952, and other commercial airlines followed shortly thereafter. The development of the DC-8 jet by Douglas Aircraft Company in 1959, which has four engines, 260 passenger seats, and a flying speed of over 600 miles per hour, made mass international air migration not only possible, but even easy (Rhoades 2008, 60-61).

As recipients of the new aviation technology, most Korean immigrants to the U. S. could reach their new homes in only a day or two. The process was made even simpler by having immigration centers conveniently located within these same international airports (Table 9). This was a revolution, of course, because previous Asian immigrants had to cross the Pacific in ships that took weeks and months, and then had to endure tedious immigration inspections at the infamous Angel Island facility in San Francisco or similar entrepots (Lee and Yung 2010).

As Table 9 shows, most Korean immigrants in late 1960s were admitted via airports in Honolulu, Seattle, San Francisco, and probably Anchorage (included in the 'Other Airports' category). These were gateways to other U. S. cities as well as important destinations on their own. However, large numbers of Korean immigrants also were admitted at New York, Chicago, Miami, and other airports even though these cities did not operate direct flights to Asia during the period. This anomaly is explained by a significant number of Korean immigrants who entered the U. S. from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, West Germany, and other countries

(Kim 1981, 54-55).

Admitting Port		Koreans		Main Connections
		Number	Percentage	
Airport	Honolulu	4,613	33.1%	Trans-Pacific
	Seattle	2,137	15.3%	Trans-Pacific
	San Francisco	1,599	11.5%	Trans-Pacific
	Los Angeles	612	4.4%	Trans-Pacific and South America
	New York	2,297	16.5%	Trans-Atlantic and South America
	Chicago	211	1.5%	Trans-Atlantic
	Washington, D.C.	66	0.5%	Trans-Atlantic
	Boston	60	0.4%	Trans-Atlantic
	Detroit	11	0.1%	Trans-Atlantic
	Miami	150	1.1%	South America
	New Orleans	29	0.2%	South America
	Puerto Rico	27	0.2%	South America
	Houston	11	0.1%	South America
	Other Airports	1,713	12.2%	
	Airport Total	**13,536**	**97.1%**	
Seaport	New York	24	0.2%	Trans-Atlantic and South America
	Los Angeles	11	0.1%	Trans-Pacific and South America
	San Francisco	4	0.0%	Trans-Pacific and South America
	Honolulu	4	0.0%	Trans-Pacific and South America
	Other Seaports	20	0.1%	
	Seaport Total	**63**	**0.4%**	
Land Border Port	Canadian Border	310	2.2%	Canada
	Mexican Border	48	0.3%	Mexico
	Land Border Total	**358**	**2.5%**	
Total		**13,957**	**100.0%**	

Table 9. Numbers of Korean Visitors Admitted between 1966 and 1970 by Ports. Source: The Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, and 1970, Tables 17B, 17C, and 17 D.

Only Northwest Orient, Pan American World Airways, Flying Tigers, and Japan Airlines could operate trans-Pacific flights between the early 1950s and the late 1970s as a result of the U. S.-Japan Bilateral Aviation Treaty of 1952. Among these, the Flying Tigers shipped only cargos and military goods. Northwest Orient and Pan American Airways, on the other hand, provided trans-Pacific passenger flight services from the U. S. to Asian destinations by establishing their Asian hub in Tokyo Haneda Airport, and Japan Airline had flight connections to a few American West Coast cities (Hufbauer and Findlay 1996, 46-48).

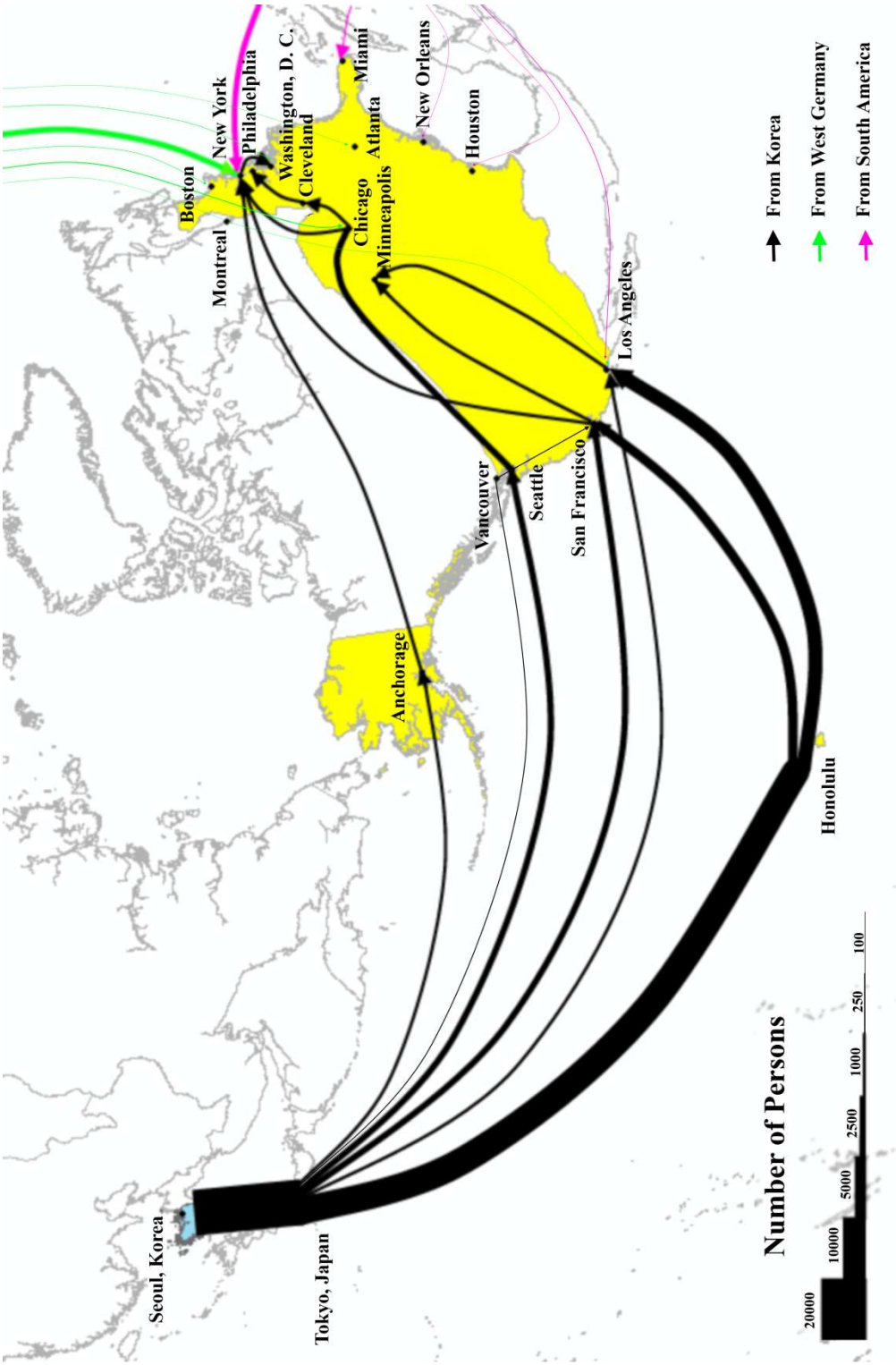
Among the three passenger airlines, Pan American did not establish any connections to South Korea from its Tokyo hub. Northwest Orient and Japan Airlines each had connections to Seoul, but not many (*Northwest Orient* 1970, *Japan Air Lines* 1970, and *Pan American World Airways* 1969). South Korea, one must remember, had a relatively poor economy at this time compared to other Asian countries. During this same period, South Korea's one and only airline until the 1980s--Korean Air--offered only three international connections, all to Japanese cities: Tokyo, Osaka, and Fukuoka (*Korean Air Lines* 1970). Thus, most Korean immigrants probably used their national airline, while some others might use Northwest Orient and Japan Airlines, for the trip to Japan, before transferring to the other airlines for continuing the trip on to the U. S.

Without much choice in selecting air-service companies, the easiest and most popular way for Koreans to travel to the U. S. until the late 1970s was via connecting or transferring flights from Tokyo (Table 10 and Map 1). This Korean route did not change until 1979, the year Korean Air initiated direct serve between Seoul and Los Angeles (Korean Air 2013).

The Korean immigrants and visitors who arrived in the U. S. from other than trans-Pacific flights came from West Germany, South American countries, and a few other places.

Flight Numbers		Flight Route													
		Seoul	Tokyo	Vancouver	Weekly Number of Flights Arrive from Foreign Cities										
					Honolulu	Anchorage	Seattle	San Francisco	Los Angeles	Minneapolis	Chicago	Cleveland	New York	Philadelphia	Washington, D.C..
					59	7	14	16	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of Weekly Operation	KE 701	---7-→													
	KE 703	---4-→													
	JAL 952	---7-→													
	JAL 954	---3-→													
	JAL 2	----------7----------→----------7----------→													
	JAL 6	------7----→----------7--------→													
	JAL 12	---2-→----------2----------→													
	JAL 34	------3----→----------3----------→													
	JAL 52	------7----→----------7----------→													
	JAL 72	------7----→													
	JAL Sun Ex.	------7----→----------7----------→													
	NWA 2	---7-→----------7----------→----------7----------→--7-→-------7-----→													
	NWA 4	----------7----------→----------7----------→------7------→													
	NWA 6	----------7--------→----------7----------→-----7-----→													
	NWA 8	------7----→----------7----------→--7→													
	NWA 10	---7-→------7----→---------7--------→-----7----→													
	PAN AM 2	------7----→----------7----------→													
	PAN AM 800	------7----→----------7--------→													
	PAN AM 846	----------7----------→													
	PAN AM 848	----------7----------→													

Table 10. Trans-Pacific Flight Timeline between Korea and U. S. Cities in 1970. Sources: Korean Air Lines 1970, Japan Air Lines 1970, Northwest Orient 1970, and Pan American World Airways 1969.



Map 1. Korean Migration to U. S. between 1966 and 1970. Sources: Trans-Pacific Flight Timeline between Korea and U. S. Cities in 1966. Sources: The Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, and 1970, Tables 17B, 17C, and 17 D, Korean Air Lines 1970, Japan Air Lines 1970, Northwest Orient 1970, Pan American World Airways 1969, Lufthansa 1970, Pan Trans World Airlines 1970, Aerolineas Argentinas 1970, and Linea Aerea National 1970.

Remember that some seventeen thousand Korean nurses and miners had been sent to West Germany between 1963 and 1974 and some thirty thousand Korean farming laborers to Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, and Paraguay. Many of those people now saw better opportunity for themselves in the United States, and a heavy inflow occurred between 1965 and the late 1970s. Most of them entered the country with tourist status but managed to obtain permanent residencies a few years later. Speaking technically, these immigrants, unrecognized by both the United States Department of Justice and the South Korean government, were illegal. So, exactly how many of these Korean visitors actually stayed in the U. S. is unknown (Dong-A Ilbo 1975, 423).

By comparing Korean visitor information provided by the Immigration and Naturalization Service with the flight connections between South Korea, West Germany, and South American countries, one can see that the Korean immigration from countries other than South Korea was significant (compare Tables 11 and 12 to Tables 9 and 10). In fact, the heavy concentration of Korean nurses in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania in those years compared to their number in California and the West can almost surely be linked with the influx of Korean nurses from West Germany. Most flights from West Germany to the U. S. in 1960s and 1970s connected via New York City.

Once the legal and illegal Korean immigrants entered via the various U. S. ports, they spread throughout the U. S. using many different means of transportation and widely varying motivations. Concentrations remained strongest in the states of initial destination such as California and New York, but the overall pattern rapidly became complex (Table 13).

Flight Numbers		Number of Weekly Operation															
		Munich, Germany	Stuttgart, Germany	Hamburg, Germany	Frankfurt, Germany	Bonn, Germany	Dusseldorf, Germany	Brussels, Belgium	Amsterdam, Netherlands	London, England	Montreal, Canada	Weekly Number of Flights Arrive from Foreign Cities					
												Boston	New York	Washington, D. C.	Chicago	Atlanta	Los Angeles
												2	97	4	13	7	3
Number of Weekly Operation	LH400	---4-→----------4----------→															
	LH404	------7----→----------7----------→															
	LH408	-------6----→----------6----------→															
	LH412	----------3-------→----------3----------→															
	LH420	----------2----------→															
	LH430	----------6----------→															
	LH450	----------2----------→--2-→----------3----------→ ----------1----------→-----1----→															
	LH A	----------4----------→															
	PAN AM 1	----------7----------→---------7---------→															
	PAN AM 59	----------7----------→----------7----------→															
	PAN AM 73	----------7----------→															
	PAN AM 75	----------7----------→----------7----------→															
	PAN AM 91	----------7----------→----------7----------→															
	PAN AM 101	----------7----------→---------7---------→															
	PAM AM 103	----------7----------→---------7---------→															
	PAM AM 105	---------7---------→---------7---------→															
	PAM AM 107	----------7----------→----------7----------→															
	TWA 701	----------3----------→---------3---------→															
	TWA 703	----------7----------→---------7---------→															
	TWA 709	----------4----------→----------4----------→															
	TWA 711	----------7----------→---------7---------→															
	TWA 741	----------7----------→															

Table 11. U. S.-West Germany Flight Timeline in 1970. Sources: Lufthansa 1970, Pan American World Airways 1969, Trans World Airlines 1970.

Flight Numbers		Number of Weekly Operation																							
		Buenos Aires, Argentina	Sao Paulo, Brazil	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	Brasilia, Brazil	Belem, Brazil	Santiago, Chile	Antofagasta, Chile	Paramaribo, Surinam	Georgetown, Guyana	La Paz, Bolivia	Lima, Peru	Guayaquil, Ecuador	Bogota, Colombia	Cali, Columbia	Caracas, Venezuela	Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago	Panama City, Panama	Guatemala City, Guatemala	Mexico City, Mexico	Merida, Mexico	Weekly Number of Flights Arrive from Foreign Cities					
																						San Juan, Puerto Rico	Houston	New Orleans	Los Angeles	Miami	New York
																						2	11	5	8	24	17
Number of Weekly Operation	AR 300	----------2----------→----------2----------→																									
	AR 320	----3-→----------3----------→																									
	AR 360	----------3----------→----------3----------→----------3----------→																									
	AR 370	----------3----------→---3-→----------3----------→----------3------→																									
	LAN 150	----------1----------→1→----------1----------→----------1----------→----------1----------→																									
	LAN 154	----------1----------→----------1----------→----------1----------→----------1----------→																									
	LAN 156	----------1----------→----------1----------→1→----------1----------→----------1----------→																									
	LAN 452	----------1----------→----------1----------→----------1----------→----------1----------→																									
	LAN 454	----------1----------→----------1----------→----------1----------→----------1----------→																									
	PAN AM 80	----------2----------→----------2----------→----------2----------→----------2----------→																									
	PAN AM 82	-1→1→----------1----------→----------1----------→																									
	PAN AM 84	-2→----------2----------→2→----------2----------→----------2----------→																									
	PAN AM 202	-4→----------4----------→ ---1→----------1----------→----------1----------→																									
	PAN AM 204	----------4----------→ ----------1----------→----------1----------→																									
	PAN AM 230	------2-----→2→----------2----------→																									
	PAN AM 442	-3→----------3----------→----------3----------→ -1→----------1----------→ -2→----------2----------→----------2-----→																									
	PAN AM 502	-----7------→ -1→1→----------1----------→1→----------1----→																									
	PAN AM 506	-------5----→																									
	PAN AM 510	-----3------→																									
	PAN AM 516	-2→----------2----------→-2→----------2----------→ -1→----------1----------→---1-→-1→----------1----------→																									
	PAN AM 518	----------2----------→----------2----------→																									
	PAN AM 551	-7→----------7--------→																									

Table 12. U. S.-South America Flight Timeline in 1970. Sources: Aerolineas Argentinas 1970, Linea Aerea National 1970, and Pan American World Airways 1969.

State	1969	1970	#	%	State/City	1969	1970	#	%
Alabama	30	72	102	0.7%	New York	590	1,017	1,607	10.5%
Alaska	11	22	33	0.2%	North Carolina	63	81	144	0.9%
Arizona	44	73	117	0.8%	North Dakota	9	16	25	0.2%
Arkansas	35	20	55	0.4%	Ohio	229	349	578	3.8%
California	1,113	2,001	3,114	20.3%	Oklahoma	57	72	129	0.8%
Colorado	95	117	212	1.4%	Oregon	99	98	197	1.3%
Connecticut	72	107	179	1.2%	Pennsylvania	305	366	671	4.4%
Delaware	8	26	34	0.2%	Rhode Island	19	25	44	0.3%
Washington, D.C.	125	128	253	1.6%	South Carolina	19	36	55	0.4%
Florida	100	139	239	1.6%	South Dakota	12	19	31	0.2%
Georgia	77	114	191	1.2%	Tennessee	73	80	153	1.0%
Hawaii	284	596	880	5.7%	Texas	227	272	499	3.2%
Idaho	7	18	25	0.2%	Utah	22	52	74	0.5%
Illinois	317	580	897	5.8%	Vermont	13	14	27	0.2%
Indiana	103	110	213	1.4%	Virginia	189	206	395	2.6%
Iowa	77	106	183	1.2%	Washington	156	228	384	2.5%
Kansas	50	58	108	0.7%	West Virginia	41	35	76	0.5%
Kentucky	48	61	109	0.7%	Wisconsin	66	95	161	1.0%
Louisiana	28	52	80	0.5%	Wyoming	6	18	24	0.1%
Maine	26	24	50	0.3%	Others	38	58	96	0.5%
Maryland	238	435	673	4.4%	**Total**	**6,045**	**9,314**	**15,359**	**100.0%**
Massachusetts	93	155	248	1.6%	New York	334	652	986	6.4%
Michigan	202	293	495	3.2%	Los Angeles	299	627	926	6.0%
Minnesota	157	189	346	2.3%	Chicago	147	323	470	3.1%
Mississippi	13	20	33	0.2%	San Francisco	143	242	385	2.5%
Missouri	135	141	276	1.8%	Baltimore	44	213	257	1.7%
Montana	14	22	36	0.2%	Washington, D.C.	125	128	253	1.6%
Nebraska	42	53	95	0.6%	Philadelphia	73	97	170	1.1%
Nevada	34	22	56	0.4%	Detroit	61	79	140	0.9%
New Hampshire	15	16	31	0.2%	Seattle	61	72	133	0.9%
New Jersey	194	373	567	3.7%	Cleveland	20	74	94	0.6%
New Mexico	25	34	59	0.4%	**City Total**	**1,307**	**2,507**	**3,814**	**24.8%**

Table 13. Numbers and Percentages of Koreans Immigrants to the U. S. in 1969 and 1970 by State and Popular Cities for Korean Immigration. Source: The Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service 1969 and 1970, Tables 12A and 12B.

Chapter 6

Korean Community Development in the U. S., Pre-1970

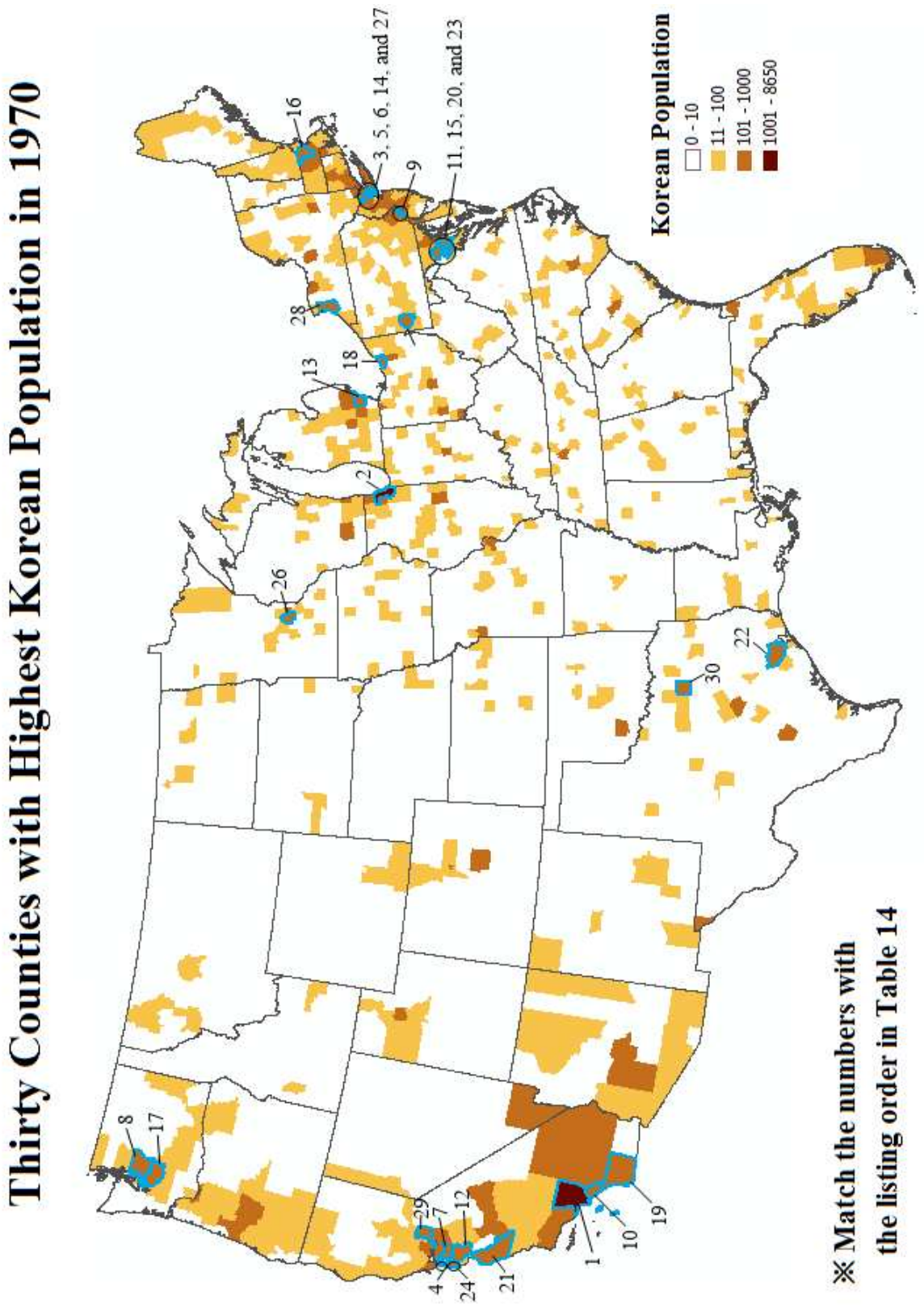
Prior to 1965, Hawaii and the West Coast were the only regions in the U. S. with enough Korean people to form sizeable ethnic communities (Cha 2010; Patterson 2000; Son 1989; Patterson 1988; Givens 1974). That year, however, mass Korean immigrations began, leading to new ethnic neighborhoods in most major U. S. cities, wherever working opportunities could be found. In addition, smaller groupings emerged in smaller towns as the wives and families of the U. S. military servicemen settled in and around the military bases and students came to various universities.

Urban Communities

By 1970, Korean ethnic populations in major U. S. cities on the West Coast, in the Northeast, and along the Great Lakes, had grown from virtually nothing to large numbers (Table 14 and Map 2). The distribution pattern looked similar to that of the U. S. population as a whole in many ways. However, upon closer inspection, one sees that the Koreans were most concentrated in the West. Then came the East, Midwest, and South, in descending order. This sequence reflects the timing of Korean arrivals in the different American regions. In the West, small communities had existed in at least a few cities since the first half of the twentieth century because of early agricultural migrations (Cha 2010). These groupings all expanded greatly after 1965, aided of course, by the West Coast's relative proximity to Korea. Beyond this area, New York and other cities in the East experienced the next most rapid rate of growth of Korean inflow. This, as I discussed in the last chapter, was caused by the arrival of some 17,000 Korean

Order	County	Korean		County	
		Population	Percent of U. S. Total	Total Population	Percent Korean
1	**Los Angeles, CA**	8,650	12.51%	7,032,075	0.12%
2	**Cook, IL**	2,513	3.64%	5,492,369	0.05%
3	**Queens, NY**	1,646	2.38%	1,986,473	0.08%
4	**San Francisco, CA**	1,216	1.76%	715,674	0.17%
5	**New York, NY**	1,080	1.56%	1,539,233	0.07%
6	**Kings, NY**	847	1.23%	2,602,012	0.03%
7	**Alameda, CA**	743	1.07%	1,073,184	0.07%
8	**King, WA**	712	1.03%	1,156,633	0.06%
9	**Philadelphia, PA**	696	1.01%	1,948,609	0.04%
10	**Orange, CA**	695	1.01%	1,420,386	0.05%
11	**Montgomery, MD**	690	1.00%	522,809	0.13%
12	**Santa Clara, CA**	685	0.99%	1,064,714	0.06%
13	**Wayne, MI**	642	0.93%	2,666,751	0.02%
14	**Bronx, NY**	562	0.81%	1,471,701	0.04%
15	**Prince Georges, MD**	539	0.78%	660,567	0.08%
16	**Middlesex, MA**	520	0.75%	1,397,268	0.04%
17	**Pierce, WA**	500	0.72%	411,027	0.12%
18	**Cuyahoga, OH**	497	0.72%	1,721,300	0.03%
19	**San Diego, CA**	478	0.69%	1,357,854	0.04%
20	**Arlington, VA**	459	0.66%	174,284	0.26%
21	**Monterey, CA**	433	0.63%	250,071	0.17%
22	**Harris, TX**	392	0.57%	1,741,912	0.02%
23	**Fairfax, VA**	388	0.56%	455,021	0.09%
24	**San Mateo, CA**	381	0.55%	556,234	0.07%
25	**Allegheny, PA**	361	0.52%	1,605,016	0.02%
26	**Hennepin, MN**	356	0.51%	960,080	0.04%
27	**Bergen, NJ**	337	0.49%	898,012	0.04%
T28	**Erie, NY**	334	0.48%	1,113,491	0.03%
T28	**Sacramento, CA**	334	0.48%	631,498	0.05%
30	**Dallas, TX**	330	0.48%	1,327,321	0.02%
	Others	41,114	59.48%	157,348,452	0.03%
	Total	69,130	100.00%	203,302,031	0.03%

Table 14. Thirty Counties with Highest Korean Population, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.



Map 2. Thirty Counties with Highest Korean Population, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.

nurses and miners who had been expelled from West Germany after a recession in that country (Kim 1981, 48-54).

The Korean population in the Midwest and South grew at a much slower pace in the 1960s. No special opportunities existed in either region, but Midwestern cities enjoyed relatively better international flight connections to Korea, and so the ethnic communities grew faster there than in Southern communities. More jobs existed in the Midwest than the South as well, and the same was true of adoption agencies that worked with Korean children (Kim 2010, 21-22). What follows is a brief discussion of early developments in the Korean-American communities within the four major American regions.

The West Coast

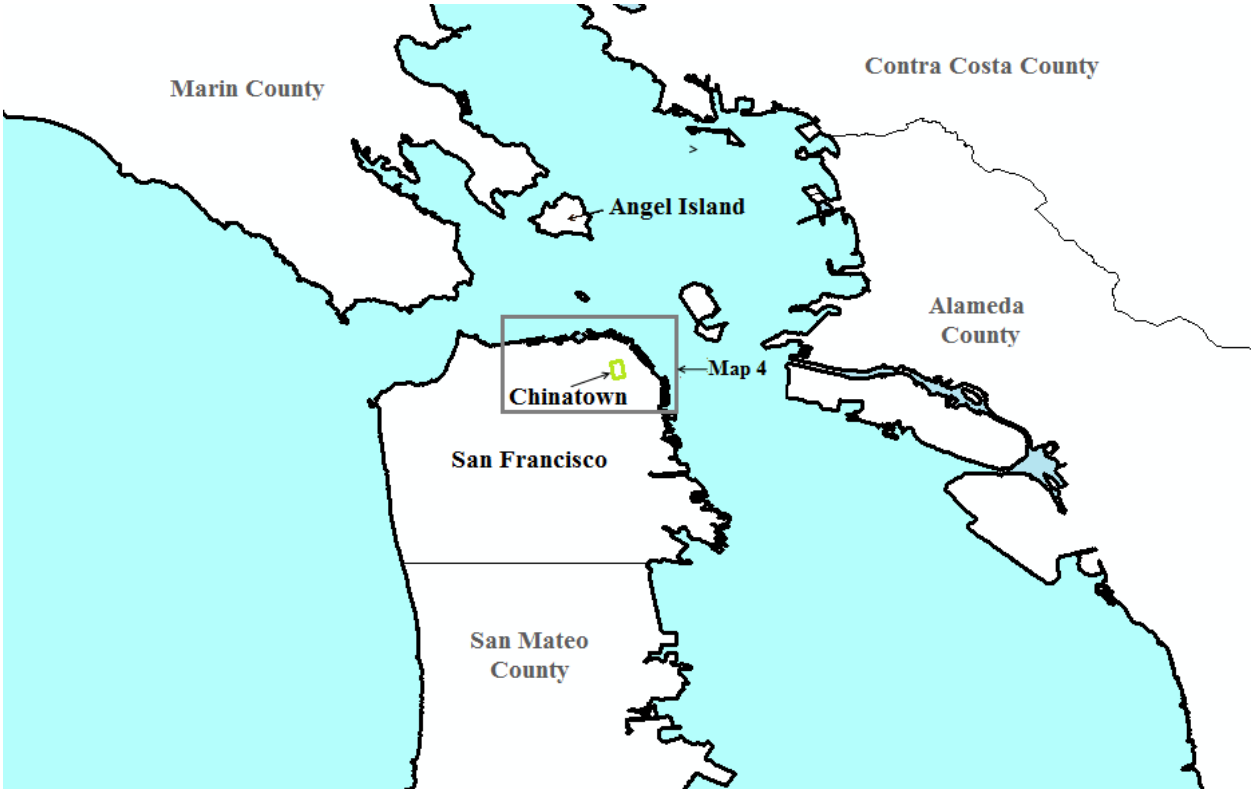
Small Korean communities existed in most Western cities before mass immigration started in the late 1960s. For example, the Korean community in San Francisco dates back to 1885. That year, three refugees from a failed military coup came to the city (Choy 1979, 80). From then until 1924 (the year the Asian Exclusion Act was passed), at least a thousand additional Korean immigrants passed through the city; some of these stayed (Choy 1979, 105).

The early Korean immigrants who entered the U. S. through San Francisco came as a result of active missionary efforts. American Christians had built several churches in Korea in the late nineteenth century and helped many poor people who were scared when Russian and Japanese troops fought over which country was to control Korean trade (the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905). Because of this aid, many Koreans liked the Americans and began to imagine the U. S. as an ideal country. Like many dreams, however, the Koreans' imaginations were not

entirely realistic. Easurk Emsen Charr (Photo 7), who came to San Francisco in June, 1905, recalled how, as an elementary school student in Pyeongyang, he looked out at the nearby American missionary homes and said to himself that "high above the others, those houses seem like some fairyland palaces!" The United States "must be a beautiful country, indeed, and a big, strong, and rich country! . . . . I hope I have an opportunity to be there some day!" (Charr 1996, 101-102).

Photo 7. Easurk Emsen Charr with his Family in a Park, June 16, 1935. Source: USC Korean-American Digital Archive, http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/p15799coll126/id/16378/rec/2 (used with permission).

Charr, as well as other Korean and Asian immigrants in the early twentieth century, entered the U. S. through the Angel Island receiving station in San Francisco Bay (Charr 1996, 135 and Map 3). As a result, the city of San Francisco became the birthplace of Korean-American society, even though the local Korean community never grew large (Choy 1979, 116).

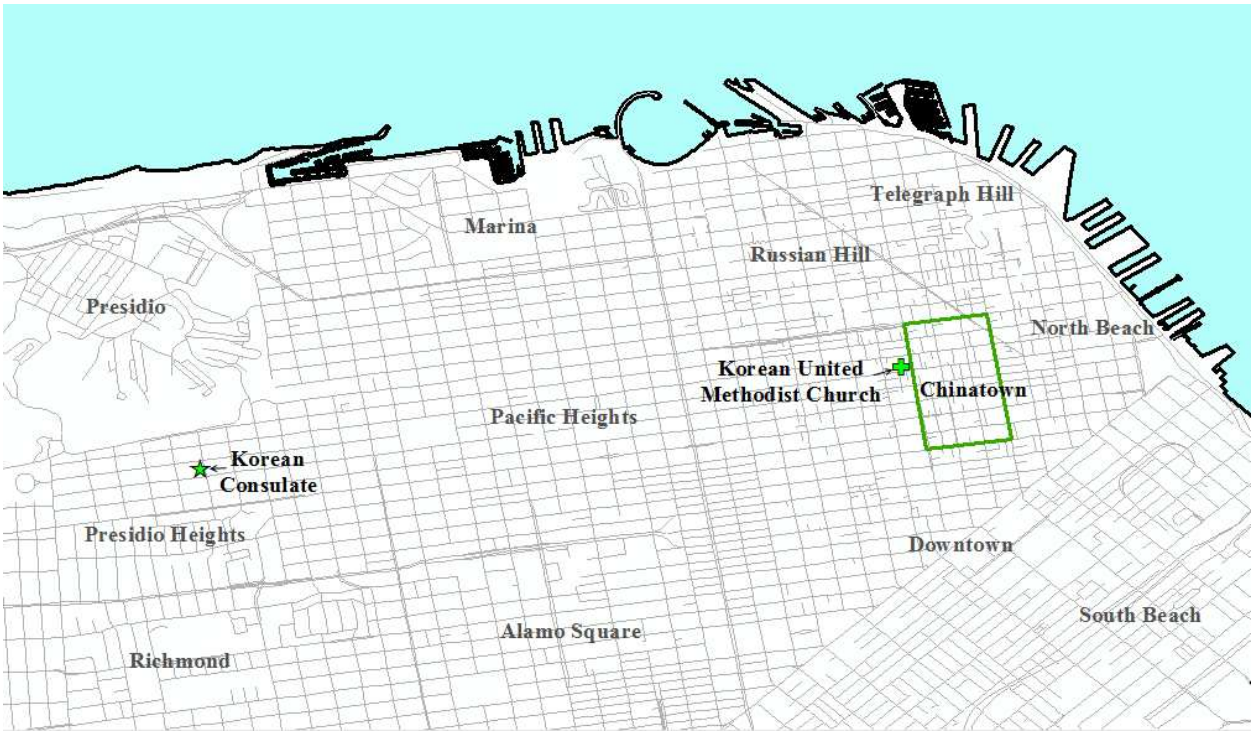


Map 3. San Francisco Bay Area and Location of Chinatown. Source: Choy 1979, 116.

Dora Yum Kim, who was born in the city in 1921, recalled the earliest memories of her life in the central part of San Francisco. Back then, the total number of Koreans was less than a hundred, and almost all of them settled in the Chinatown community. They had no choice but to live in this rough part of the city, she said, because that was a time when racial segregation was acceptable. Koreans wanted to separate themselves from the other Asian groups, but they were legally restricted to Chinatown. They could not even rent a place outside of it, and showing up

outside of the boundary could be life threatening. With limited space and money, several Korean families, just like their neighbors, often had to share single rooms without a window, toilet, bathtub, or refrigerator, and some babies died because of poor sanitation (Chin 1999, 17-31). Still, they were satisfied with their new American lives because they preferred this relative freedom rather than living under Japanese rule back in Korea at the time (Chin 1999, 62).

San Francisco became home to two important Korean-American historical landmarks. One is the Korean United Methodist Church at 1123 Powell Street, built in 1928 (Map 4 and Photo 8). It is the oldest Korean building in the U. S. and served as the central institution for the group's social, political, and educational life until the 1960s (Choy 1979, 116). Another landmark is the Korean Consulate at 3500 Clay Street, built in 1949. It was the first such consulate in the U. S. (Yu 2002, 401-410).

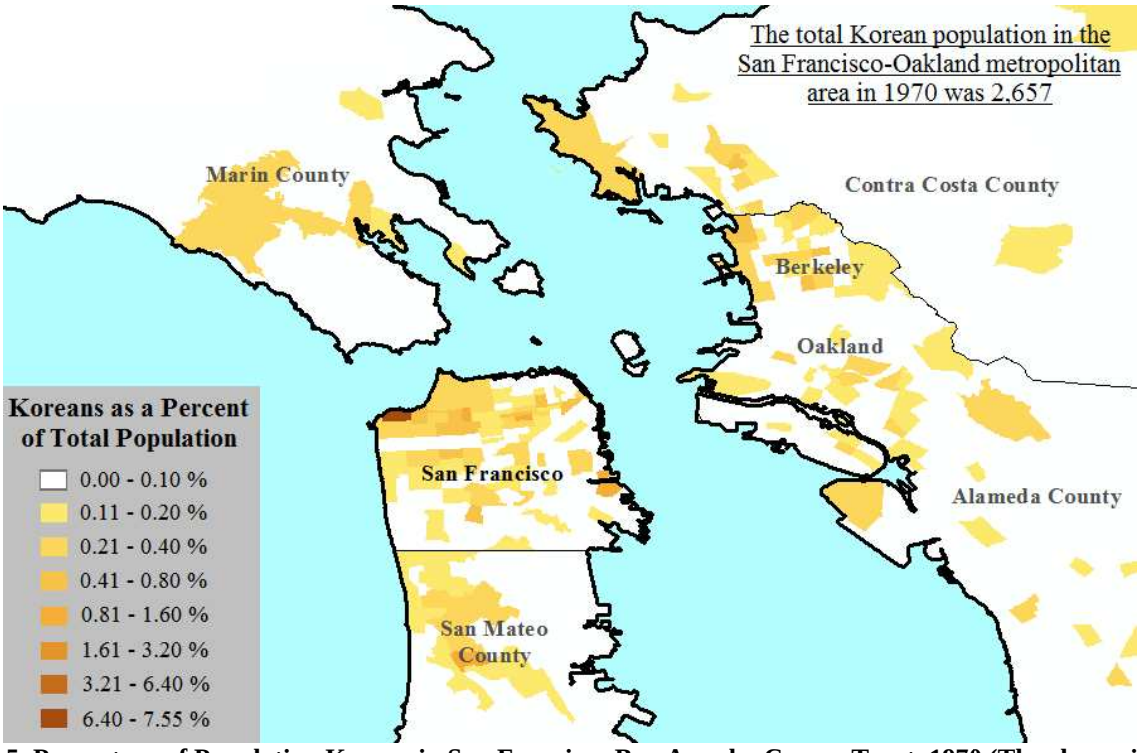


Map 4. Locations of Korean-American Historical Landmarks and Chinatown in San Francisco. Source: Choy 1979, 116 and Yu 2002, 401-410.

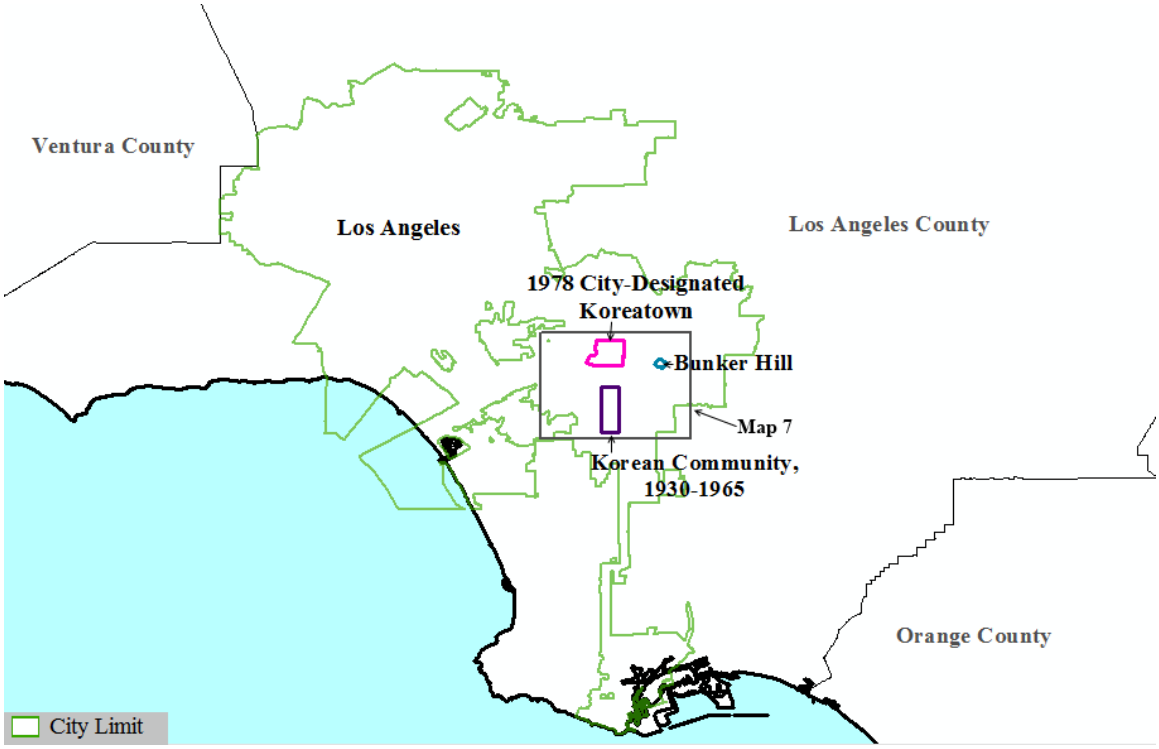
Photo 8. San Francisco United Methodist Church at 1123 Powell Street, 1964. Source: San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library, AAB-1506 (used with permission).

The Korean population remained small until 1965, but jumped to 1,216 by 1970 (U. S. Census Bureau 1970). In that year, Koreans were present around all the San Francisco Bay area, including Oakland and Berkeley (Map 5). However, the largest portion still lived in the city.

As the center of the Californian economy shifted from north to south in the twentieth century, Los Angeles became the major destination for Korean immigrants. Just like in San Francisco, they could settle only in restricted areas within the inner city. Until the 1920s, they were restricted to Bunker Hill near the downtown (Kim 2011, 9, Map 6, and Photo 9). Then, the ethnic community moved to South Los Angeles as the city redistricted its racial enclaves in the 1930s (Kim 2011, 35). The new district was bounded by South Western Avenue and South Vermont Avenue, between West Adams Boulevard and West Slauson Avenue (Map 7). In 1940,



Map 5. Percentage of Population Korean in San Francisco Bay Area by Census Tract, 1970 (The classes in this map and all following population maps in this research are comparable one to another. They use a geometric progression with an increasing constant ratio of two). Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.



Map 6. Los Angeles and Locations of Historical Korean Communities. Source: Kim 2011, 9 and Kim 2011, 35.

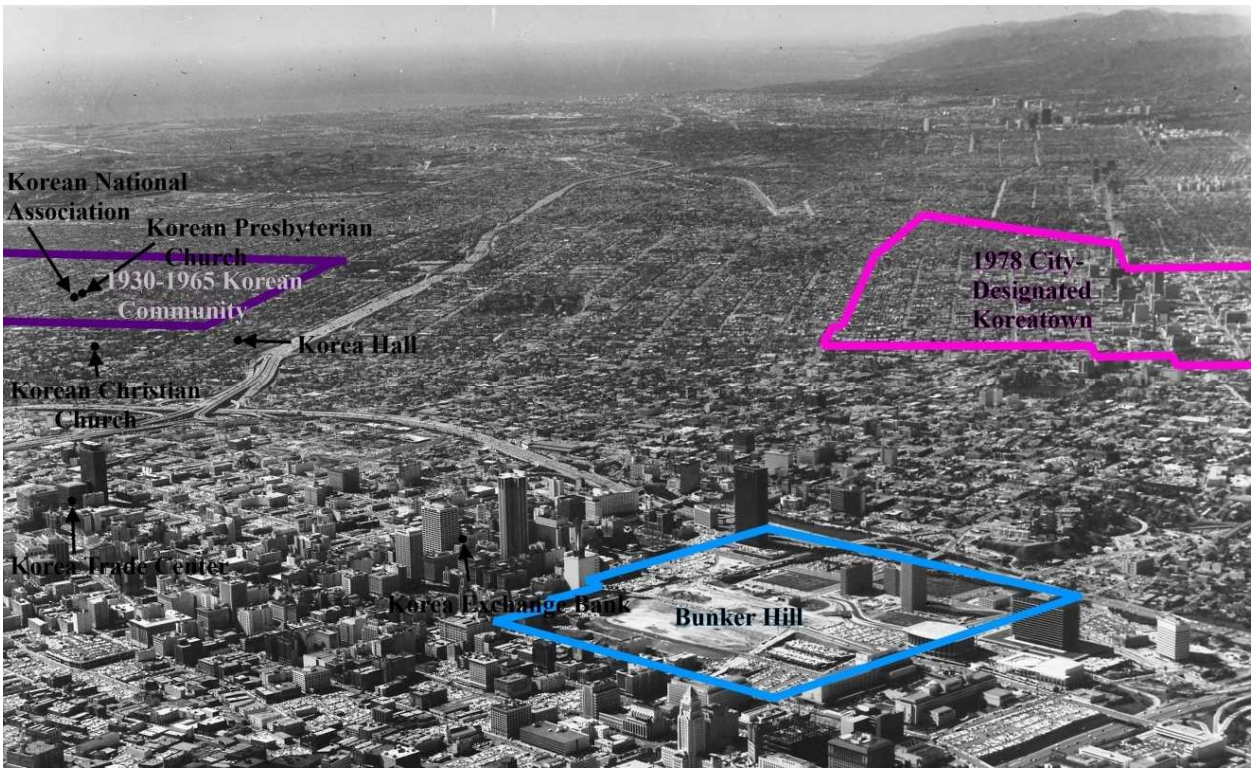
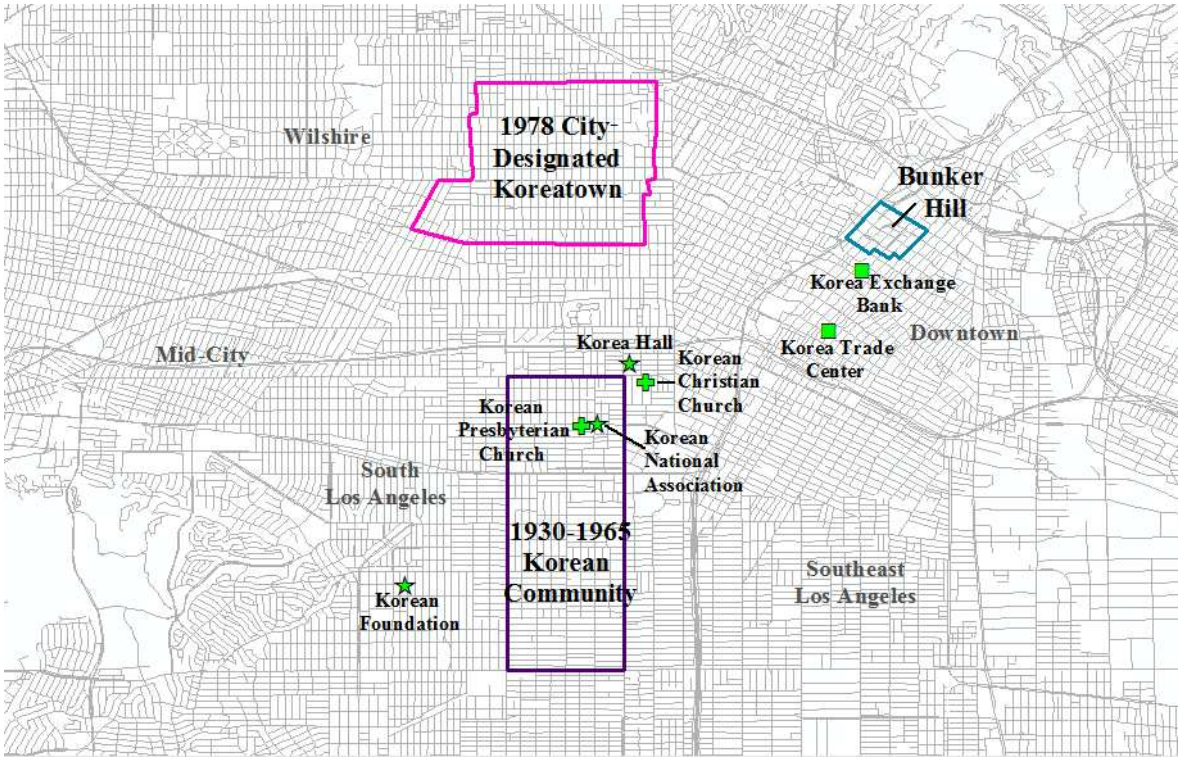


Photo 9. Old and New Korean Communities in a 1970 Los Angeles Aerial Photograph. Sources: Doheny Memorial Library, University of Southern California, DW-02-75-19 and Pacific Telephone's Los Angeles City Directory 1969 (used with permission).



Map 7. Locations of Historical Korean-American Communities and Organizations in Los Angeles. Source: Kim 2011, 9, Kim 2011, 35, and Pacific Telephone's Los Angeles City Directory 1969.

some six hundred and fifty Koreans lived in this neighborhood. This number is small in absolute terms, but it represented more than a third of the entire Korean-American population in the forty-eight states. As a result, major ethnic organizations were built in the area, including the Korean National Association and Korean Presbyterian Church (Givens 1974, 22 and Photos 10 and 11).

For the first time in history, Korean Americans had built a solid ethnic enclave in the United States. By the late 1930s, they owned more than sixty small businesses including barbershops and rooming houses. Partially, they started such enterprises on their own merits. But they also did so because racial employment restrictions made it difficult to find jobs in larger companies. Owning one's own business was also a way to avoid facing discriminations (Ingram 2007, 26).

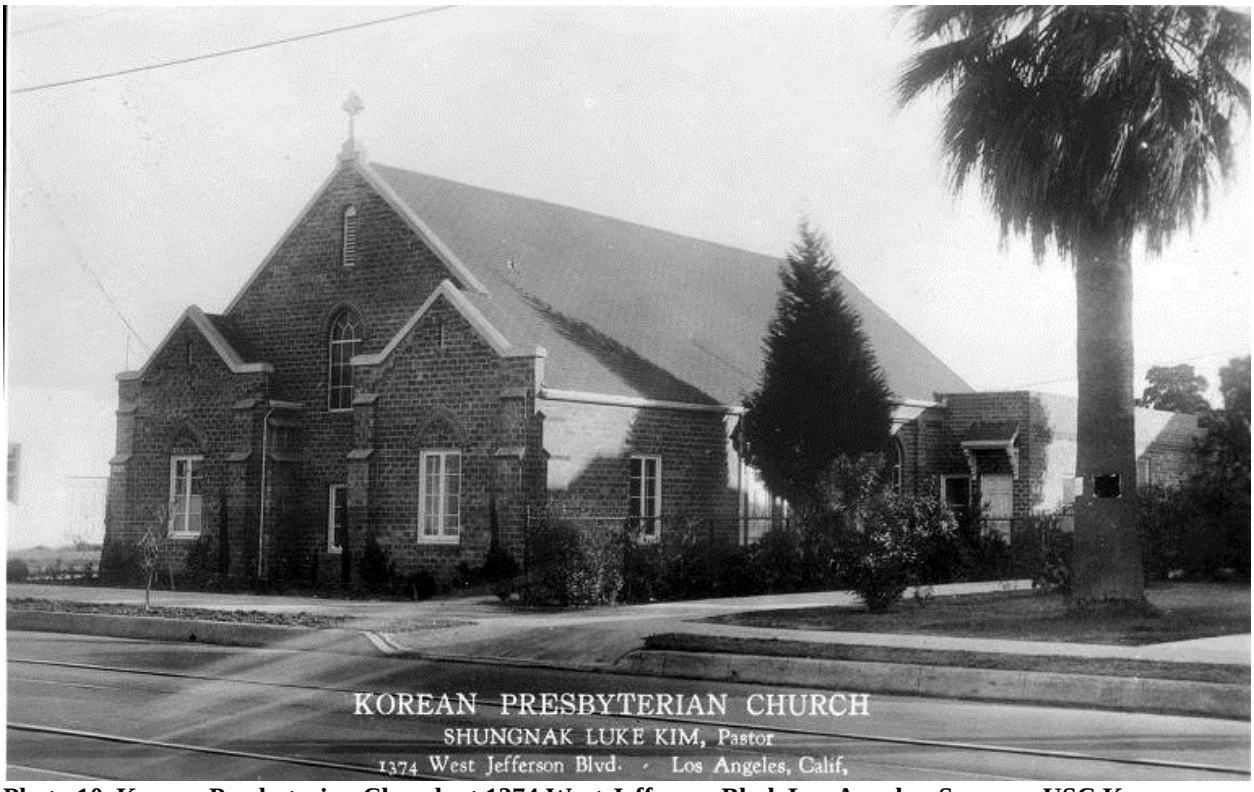


Photo 10. Korean Presbyterian Church at 1374 West Jefferson Blvd, Los Angeles. Sources: USC Korean-American Digital Archive, http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/p15799coll126/id/15004/rec/2 (used with permission).

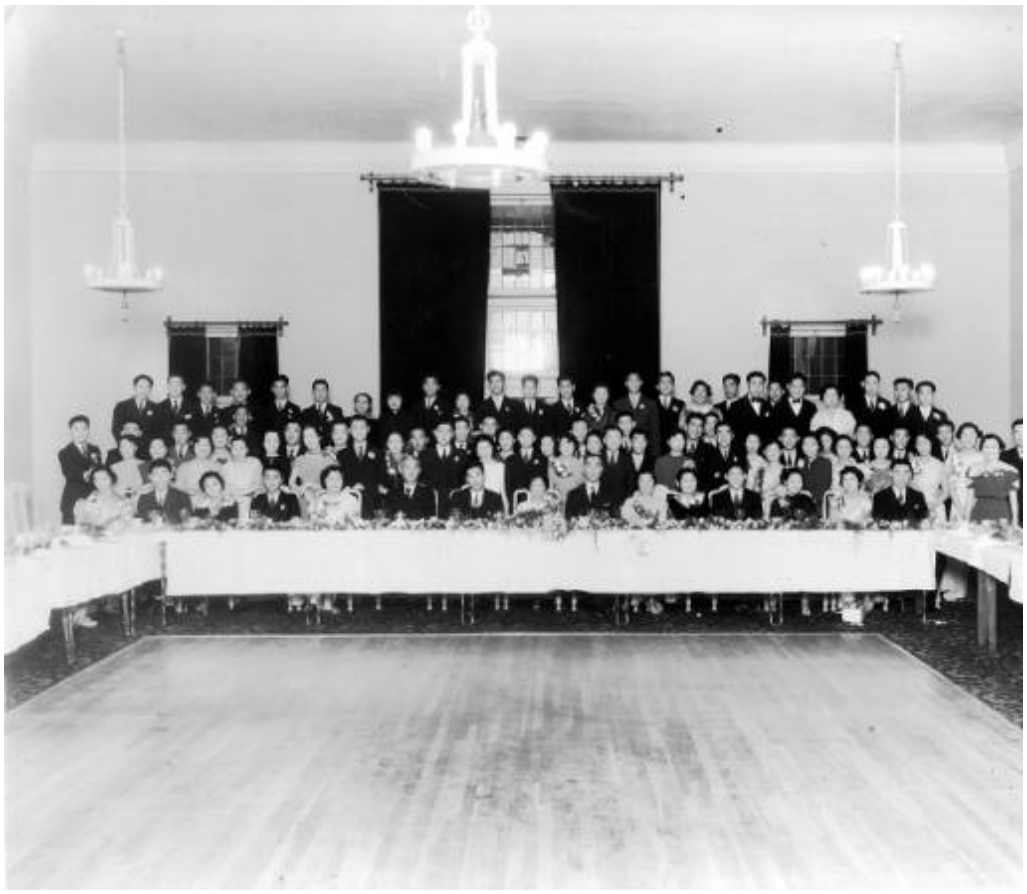
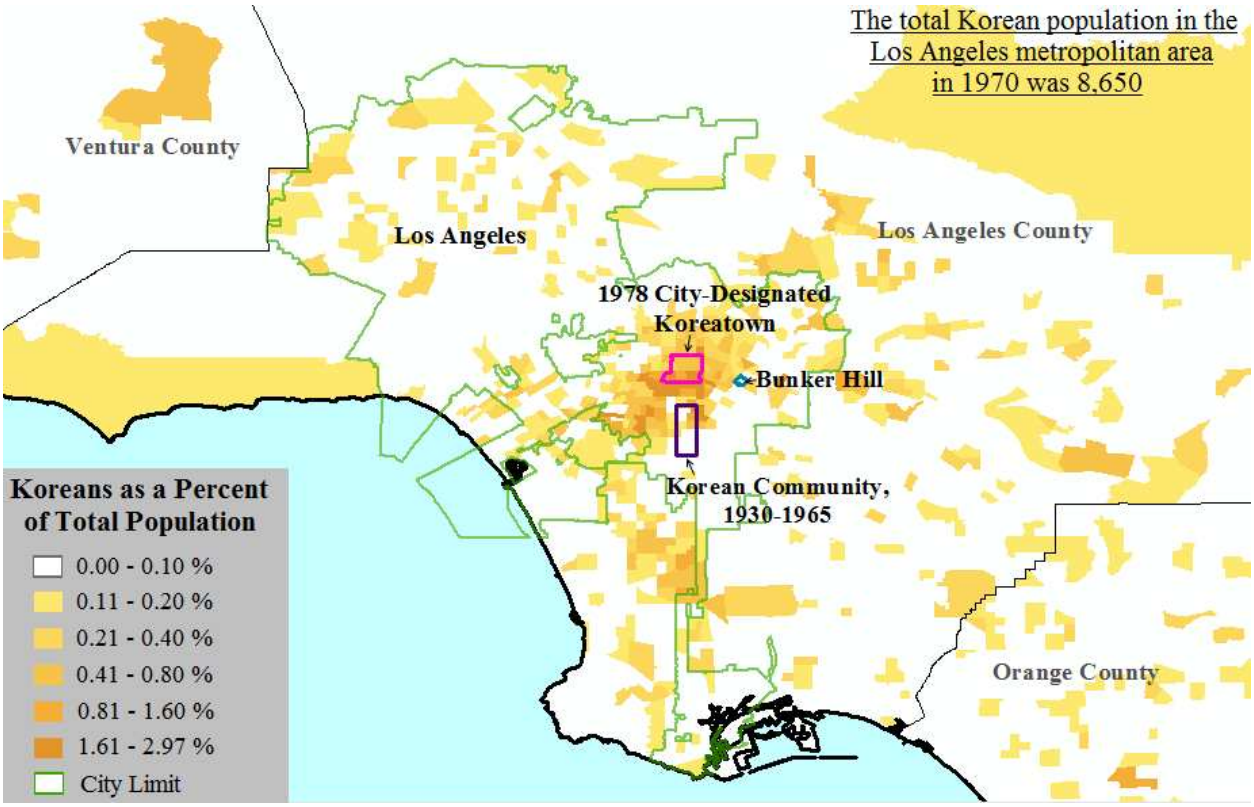


Photo 11. Korean National Association of Los Angeles Dinner Meeting, 1936. Sources: USC Korean-American Digital Archive, http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/p15799coll126/id/15360/rec/9 (used with permission).

Although the Los Angeles community served as an unofficial capital for Korean Americans, the Korean people there were still a minority in this district compared to much larger African-American and other Asian-American populations. Brenda Paik Sunoo, a rare third-generation Korean American, was born in the South Los Angeles community in 1948. Recalling her elementary school years, she remembered not having many Korean classmates but many who were Asian or African American. No white students attended this school, so seeing any Caucasian was a culture shock to her. In fact, her first memory of white people came in junior high school when her family moved out of the district (Kim and Yu 1996, 146-148) after residential segregation restrictions were abolished following the African-American Watts Riots

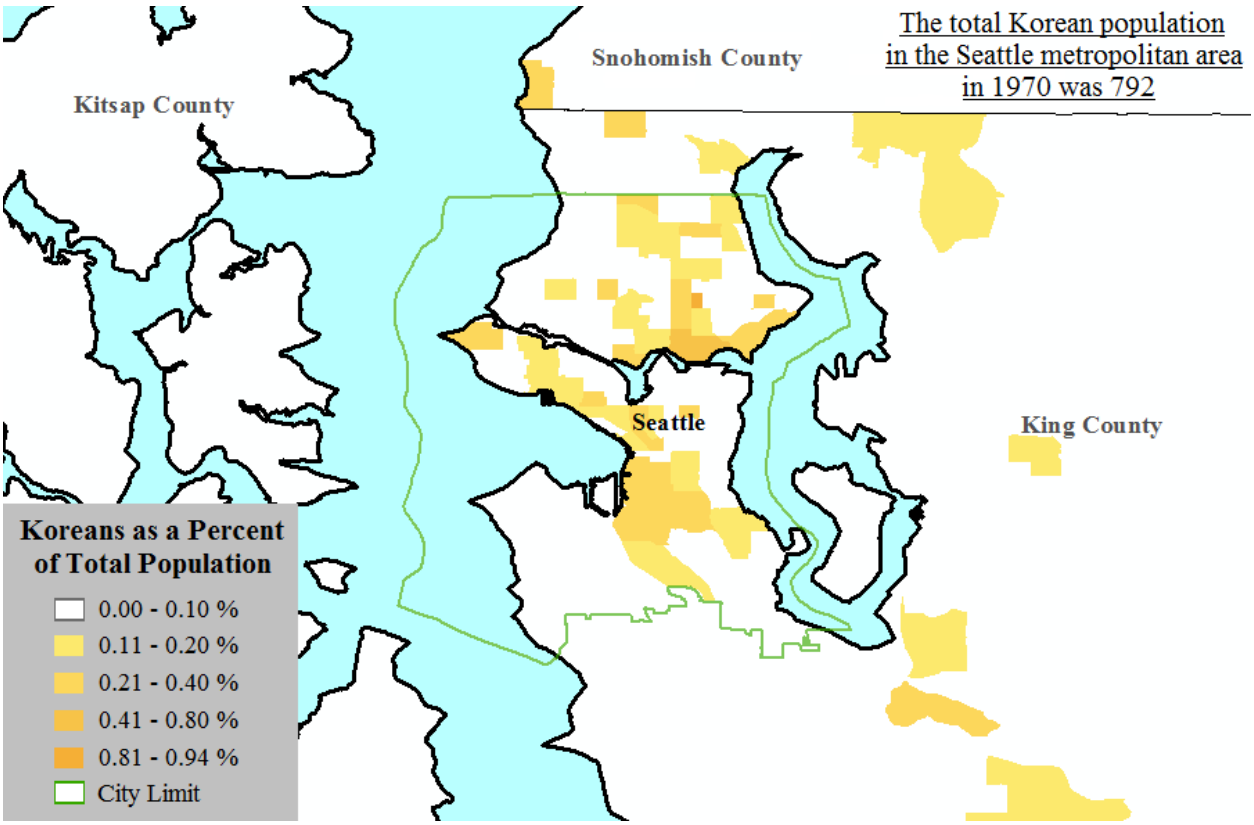
of 1965. Better business opportunities existed on Wilshire Boulevard (located inside the present Koreatown), and so the Korean ethnic core began to shift north from the original community (Kim 2011, 9). Still, like San Francisco, most Koreans in Los Angeles remained within the central section of the city (Map 8).



Map 8. Percentage of Population Korean in Los Angeles by Census Tract, 1970. Sources: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1 and Pacific Telephone's Los Angeles City Directory 1969.

Koreans also came to a third American city, Seattle, early in the twentieth century, although this destination was not nearly as popular as Los Angeles. Hong-Sok Mun, the owner of the Hansung Hotel in Hawaii, contributed to this movement in 1905 by recruiting about thirty Koreans to help construct the Great Northern Railroad that connects Seattle with St. Paul, Minnesota (Kim 1974, 5-11). Although the Korean presence in Seattle is almost as old as that in Los Angeles, no significant ethnic enclave existed in Washington before 1970. Still, it is clear

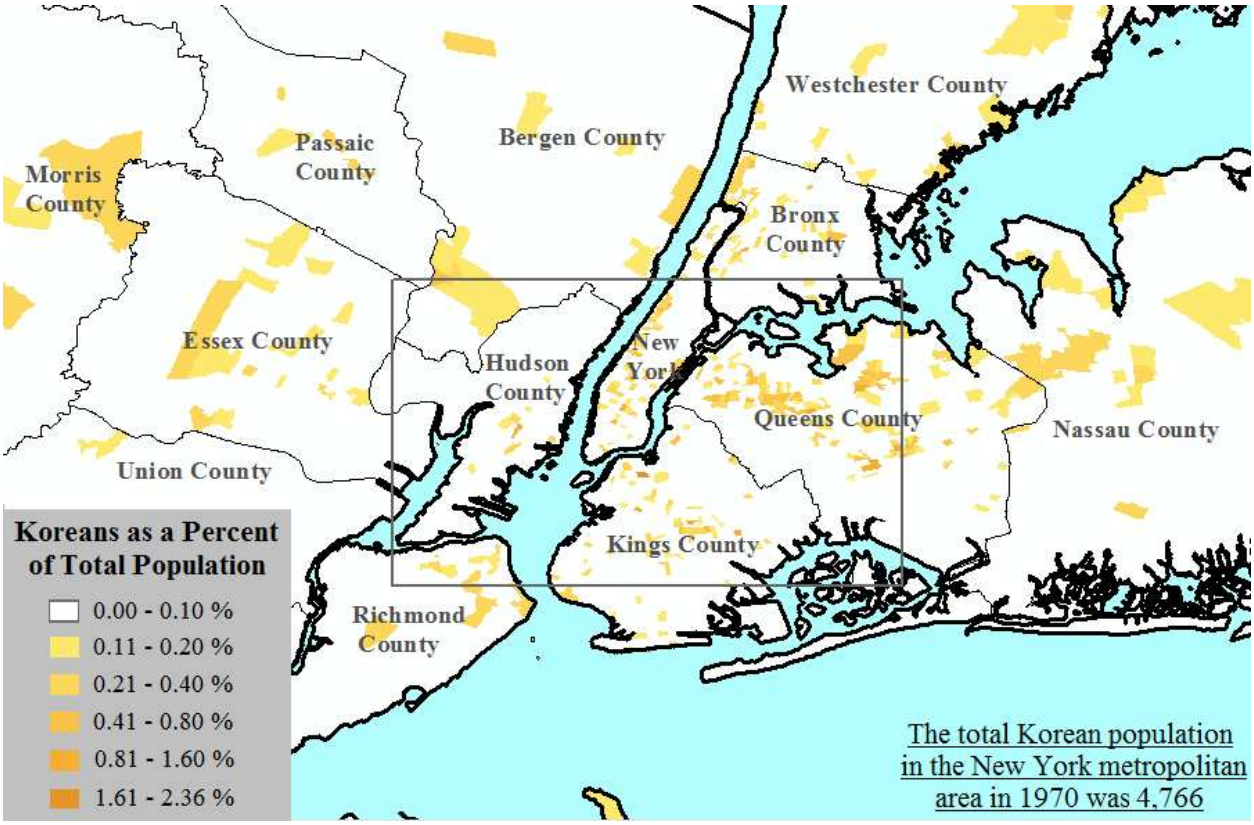
that most of these early immigrants lived within the inner city (Map 9).



Map 9. Percentage of Population Korean in Seattle by Census Tract, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.

The Northeast

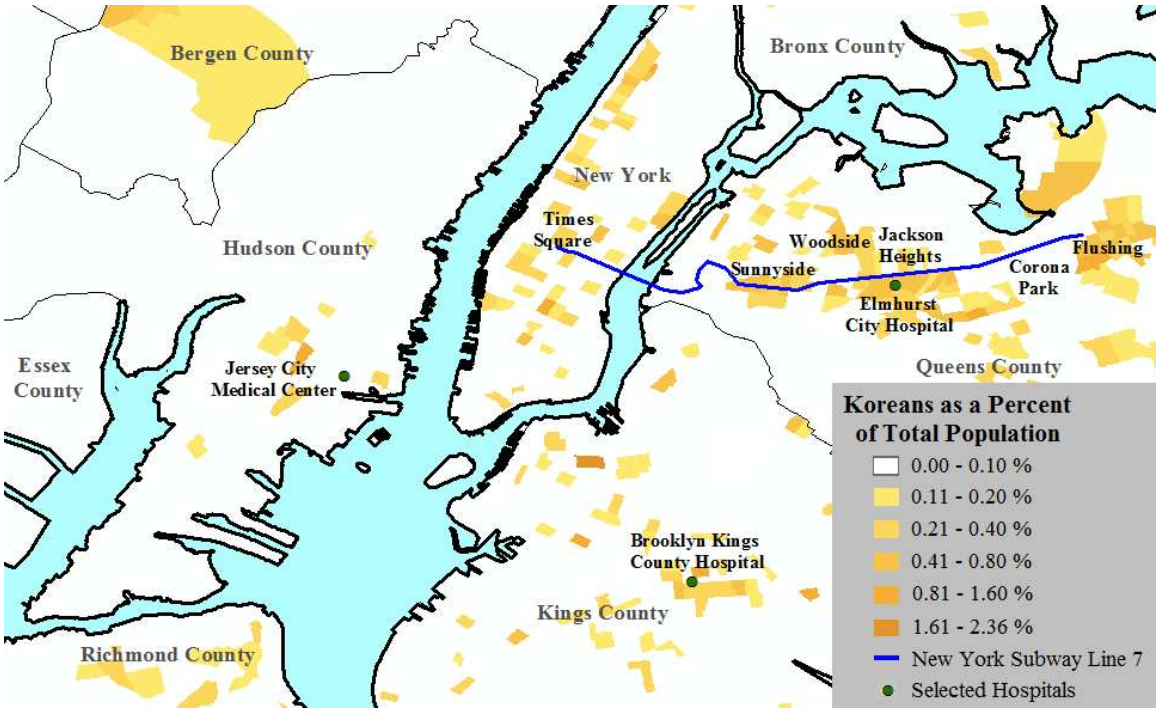
Other than the three West Coast cities, New York and several other northeastern urban areas hosted the greatest numbers of Korean Americans in the late-1960s. Still, none of these populations were very large. Some four thousand Koreans lived in the New York City metropolitan area in 1970, for example, but they had settled fairly evenly throughout the city with modest concentrations in several lower- and middle-income neighborhoods (Kim 1981, 184-185 and Map 10).



Map 10. Percentage of Population Korean in New York City by Census Tract, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.

Hae Sun Yoon, who lived in Flushing, Queens, New York for close to five decades, has recalled the process ethnic community development in that region (*The Korea Times* 2010). Before the 1960s, there were only a few Korean residents. Most of these were university students who lived in various dormitories on several campuses in Manhattan. A more general population expansion began at the conclusion of the 1964/1965 New York World's Fair held at the Flushing Meadows-Corona Park in Queens. Some two hundred Korean visitors to that event elected not to leave the U. S. and instead settled down in Flushing and nearby Elmhurst, Queens (*The Korea Times* 2010 and Map 11).

Unlike on the West Coast, the early Koreans in New York did not experience residential segregation. They could live in every part of the city, wherever they could afford. Because of



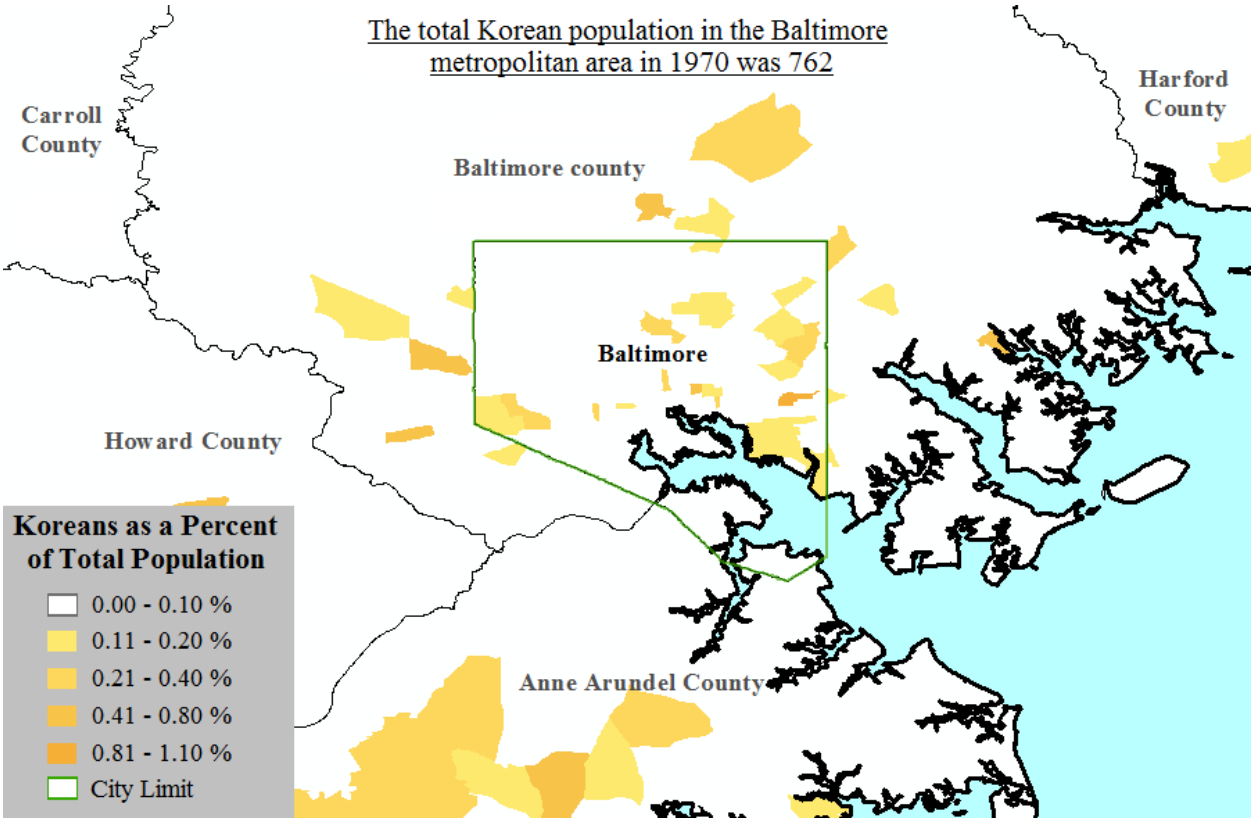
Map 11. Percentage of Population Korean in New York City by Census Tract, 1970 and Popular Neighborhoods and Hospitals for Local Koreans. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1, *The Korea Times* January 4, 2010.

this, specific ethnic neighborhoods were scare. One concentration, however, extended along the Subway Line 7 between Flushing and Times Square (Map 11). Key towns included Jackson Heights, Woodside, and Sunnyside. This linear pattern developed because of that subway route's proximity to the World's Fair site at Corona Park (*The Korea Times* 2010).

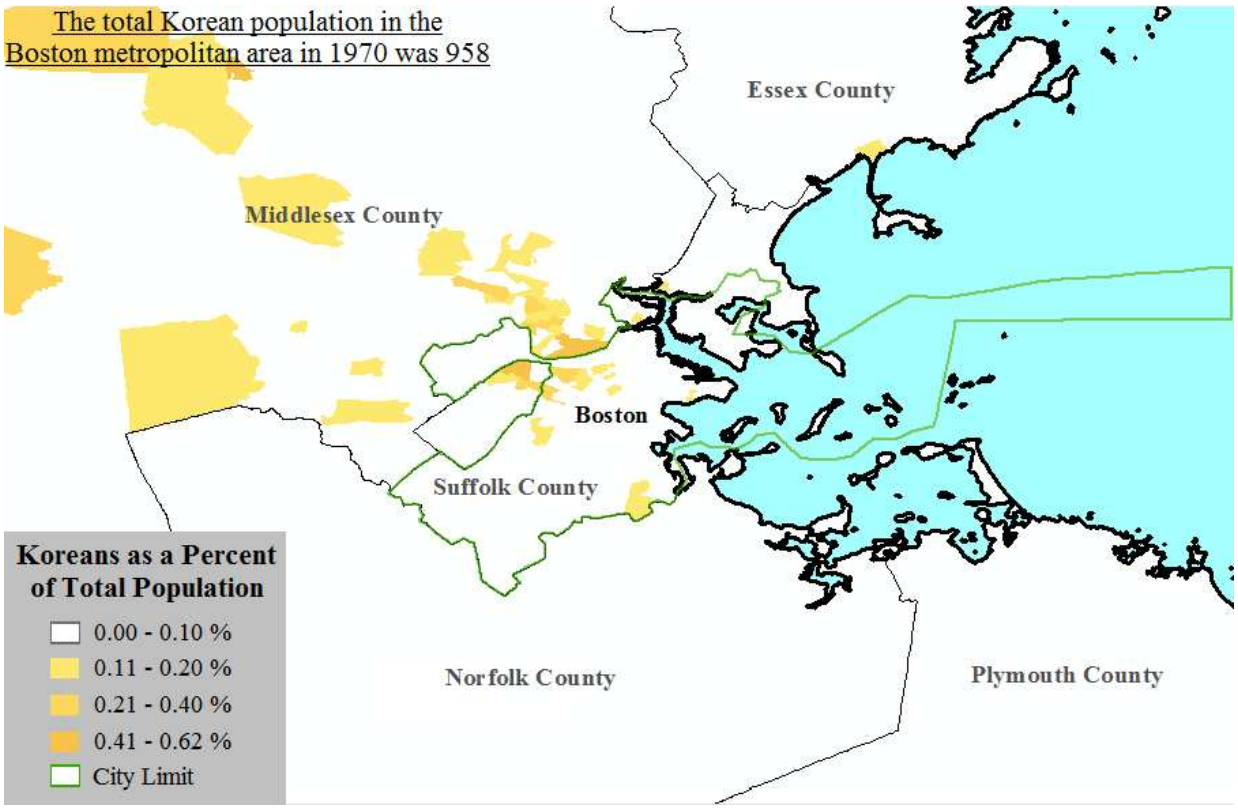
New York Koreans merged into mainstream American society faster than did their kinsmen on the West Coast. Much of this was because racial discrimination was less. Not many of Koreans in New York opened small business at this time. Instead, they looked for jobs with larger companies, especially in the medical professions. Hae Sun Yoon witnessed sizeable growth of Korean physician and nurse populations around public hospitals in the city starting in the late 1960s. Elmhurst City Hospital, the Brooklyn Kings County Hospital, and the Jersey City Medical Center in New Jersey were the biggest employers (Map 11 and *The Korea Times* 2010).

These professional people founded the Korean-American Medical Association (KAMA) in New York in 1974 (*Korean-American Medical Association* 2013).

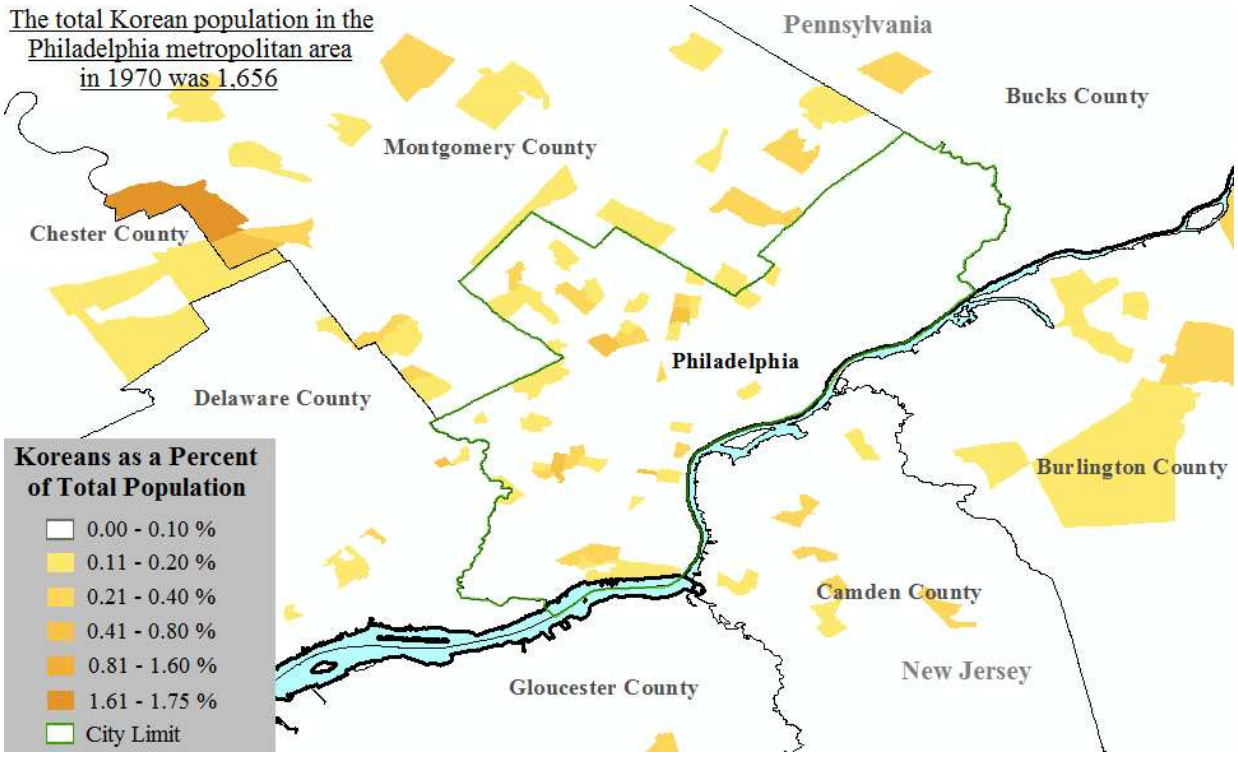
Although most of the early Korean medical professionals migrated to New York City, some also went Baltimore, Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington, D. C. (Kim 1981, 156-157). Their resultant population patterns were similar to the one found in New York, without significant clusters (Maps 12, 13, 14, and 15). Washington, D. C. was probably is the second-most important city for early Korean Americans in the Northeast primarily because its importance in politics. The numbers were nevertheless small. For example, only thirty-seven Koreans lived in the city in 1944 including fourteen college graduates who worked in various government agencies and six students. Korean government leaders had established the Korean



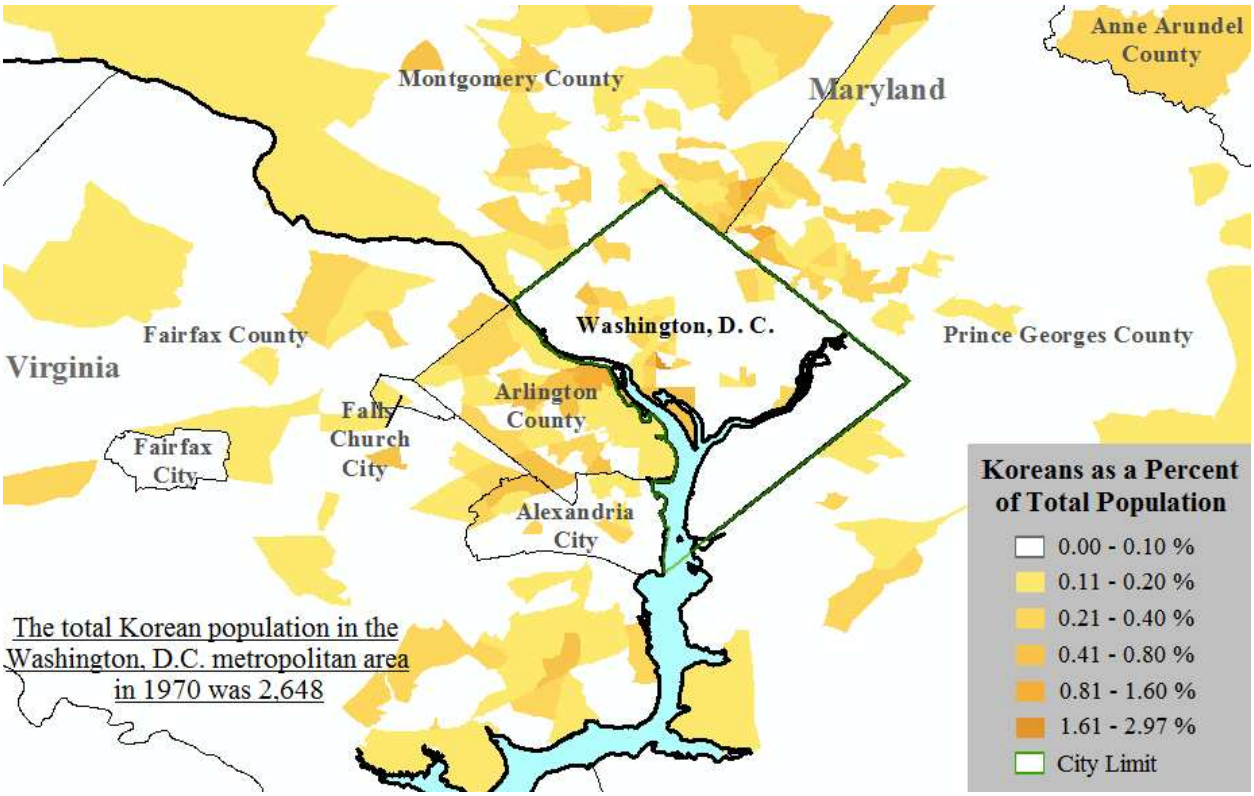
Map 12. Percentage of Population Korean in Baltimore by Census Tract, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.



Map 13. Percentage of Population Korean in Boston by Census Tract, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.



Map 14. Percentage of Population Korean in Philadelphia by Census Tract, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.



Map 15. Percentage of Population Korean in Washington, D. C. by Census Tract, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.

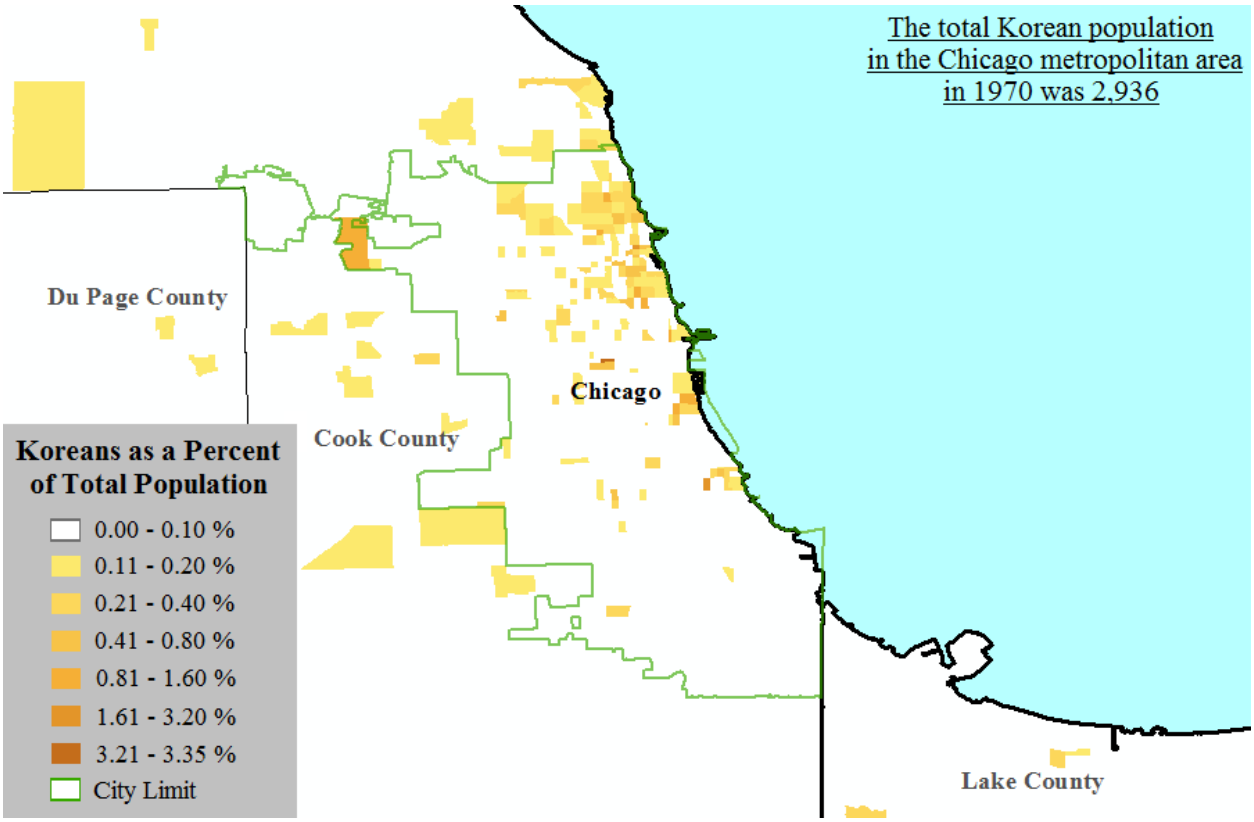
Commission there in 1919 as a base for lobbying American politicians. Syngman Rhee, the first Korean president, was this commission's most important contributor. He had been one of the first Korean university students who studied abroad in the U. S., and had therefore seen first-hand the potential for American aid. He attended George Washington University in Washington, D. C. between 1904 and 1907, earning bachelor's degree, before going on for an M.A. at Harvard in 1910 and for a Ph.D. at Princeton (Kim 1974, 5-47).

Other Regions

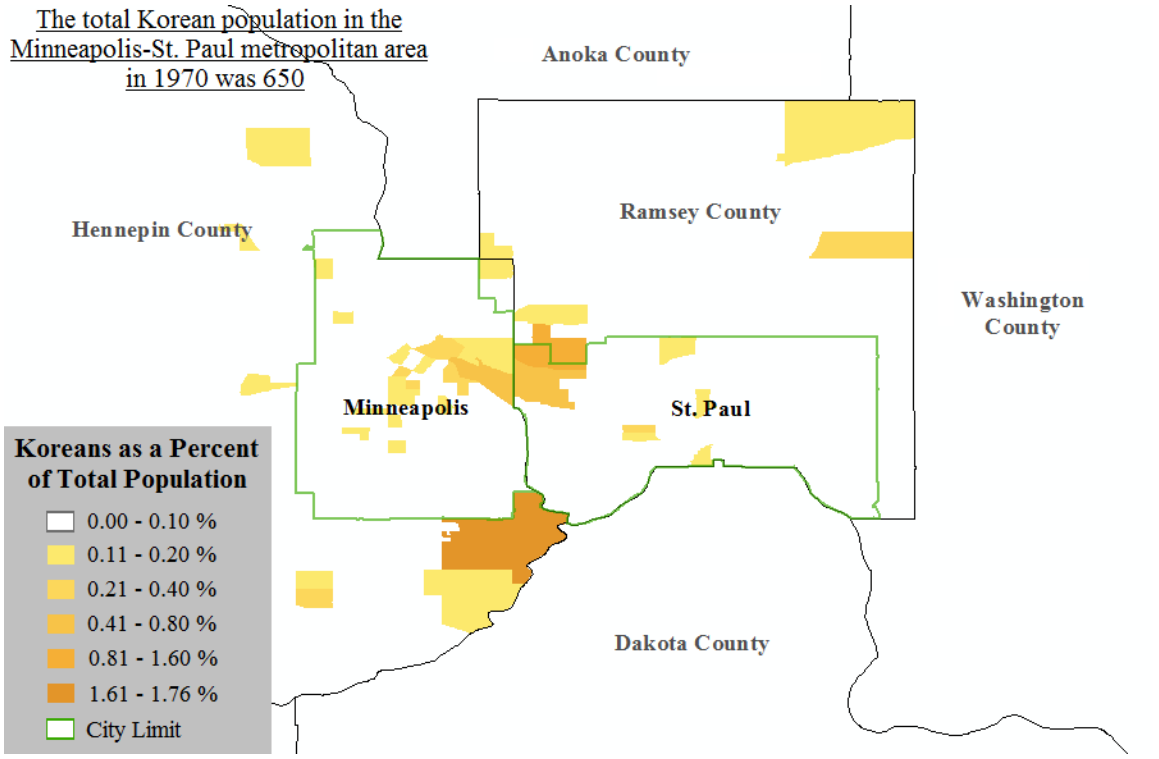
The building processes of Korean communities in the Midwest and the South were considerably slower than on the coasts. Cities there lacked historical connections to the earliest

Korean immigrants (unlike places in the West) and did not experience shortages of medical professionals as did Eastern cities. Within the American interior, however, variation existed within the small Korean populations, and the numbers grew quickest in Chicago and Minneapolis-St. Paul (compare Maps 16 and 17 to Maps 18, 19, and 20).

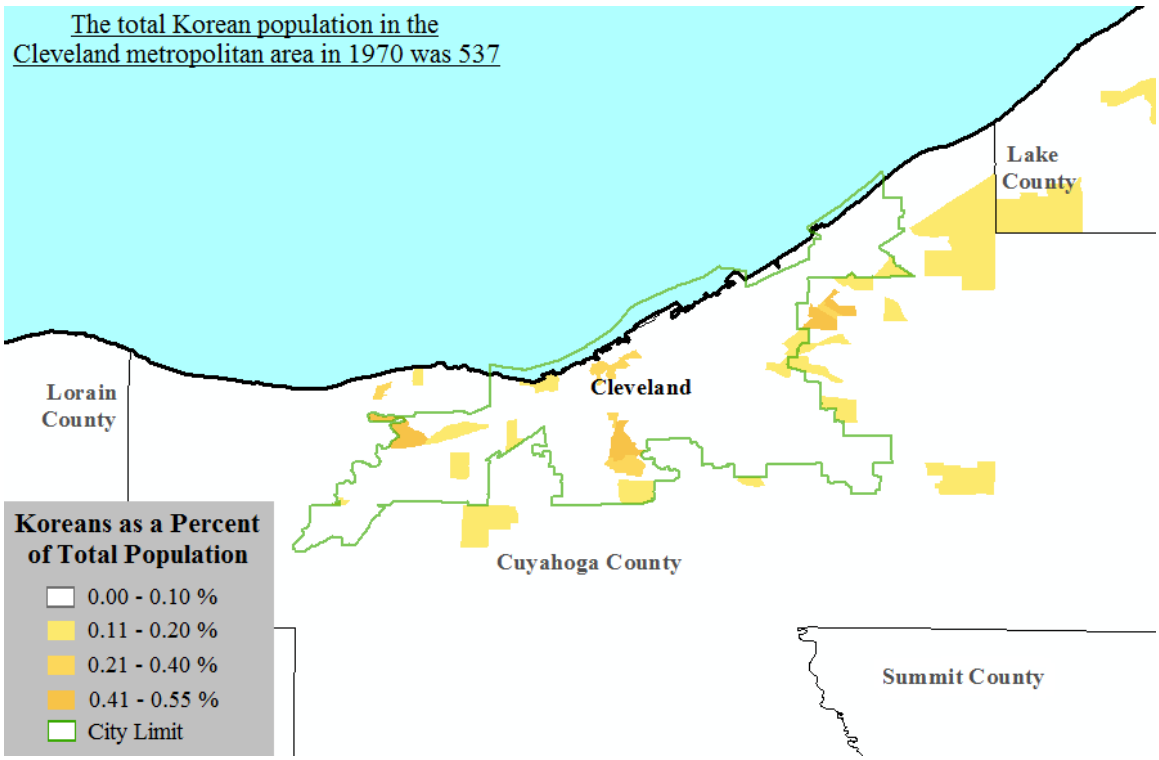
Much of the expansion in Chicago relates simply to this city being the second-largest in America during that time period and therefore a source of many jobs. However, unlike in the cities on the West Coast and in the Northeast, the Koreans in Chicago concentrated more in relatively wealthy neighborhoods (Map 16). I suspect that three reasons account for this pattern. First, nearly all the Koreans in Chicago in 1970 were post-1965 immigrants who therefore did not experience racially segregated housing like some of their West Coast kinsmen. These new



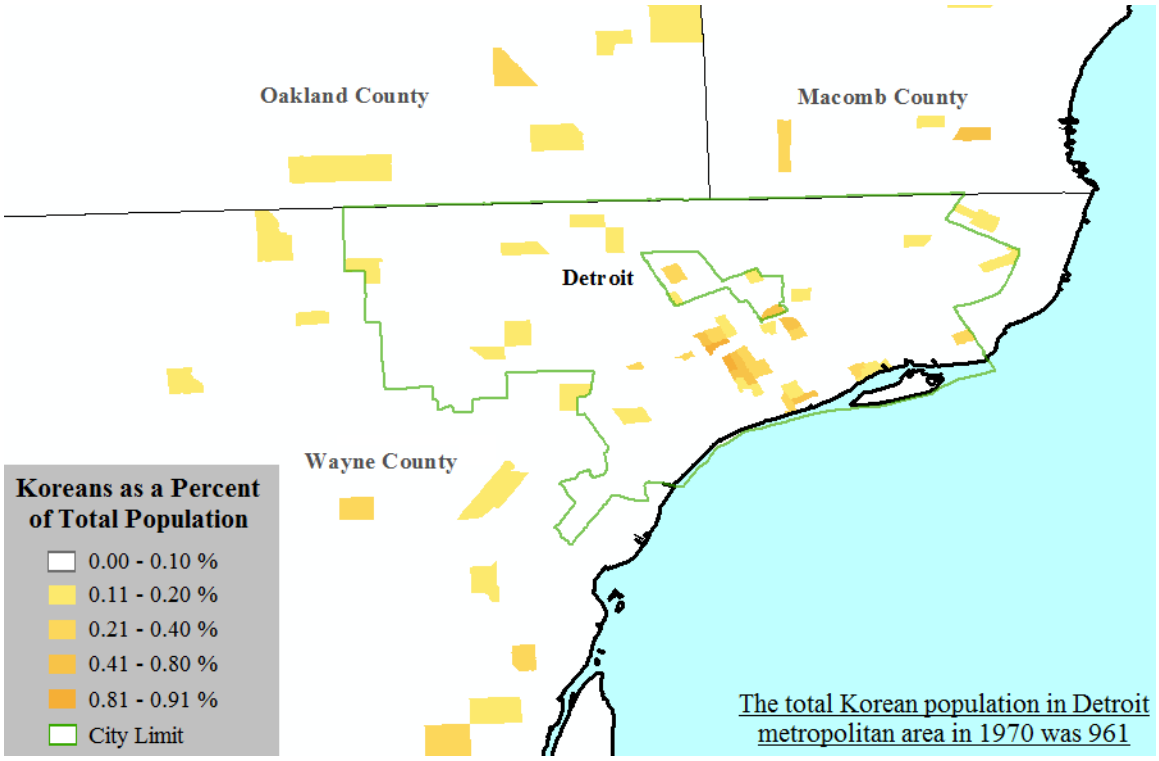
Map 16. Percentage of Population Korean in Chicago by Census Tract, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.



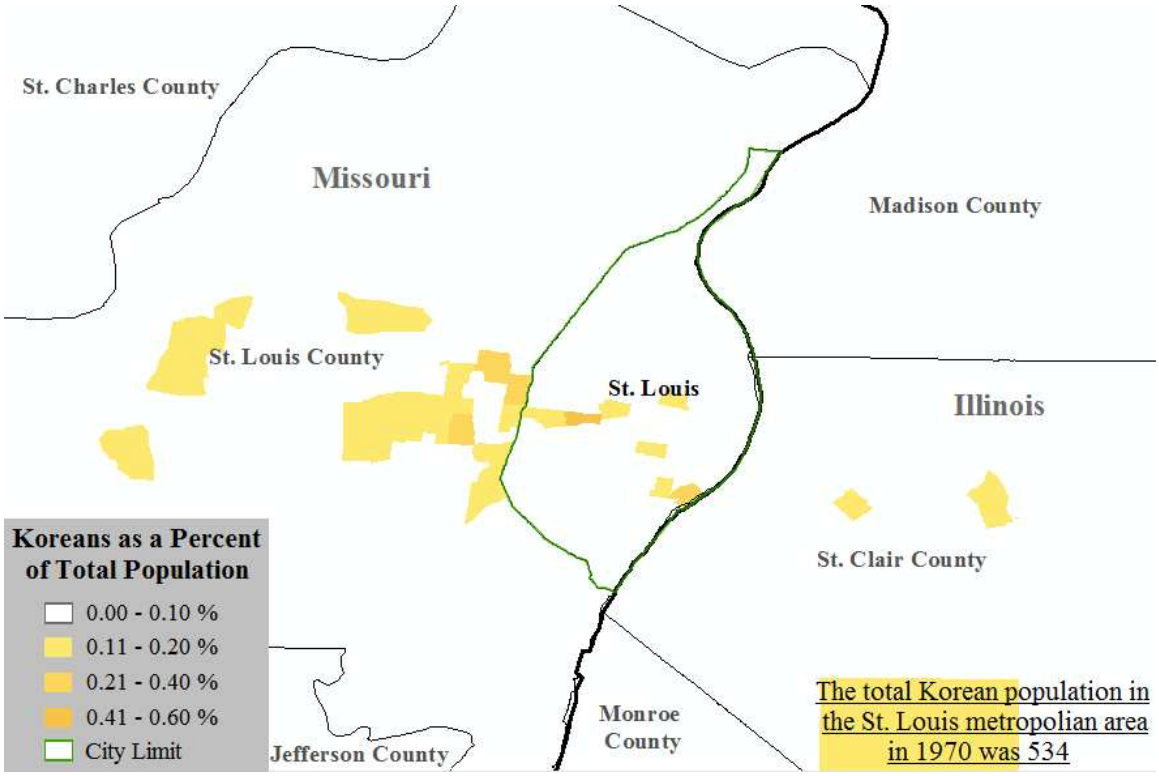
Map 17. Percentage of Population Korean in Minneapolis-St. Paul by Census Tract, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.



Map 18. Percentage of Population Korean in Cleveland by Census Tract, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.



Map 19. Percentage of Population Korean in Detroit by Census Tract, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.



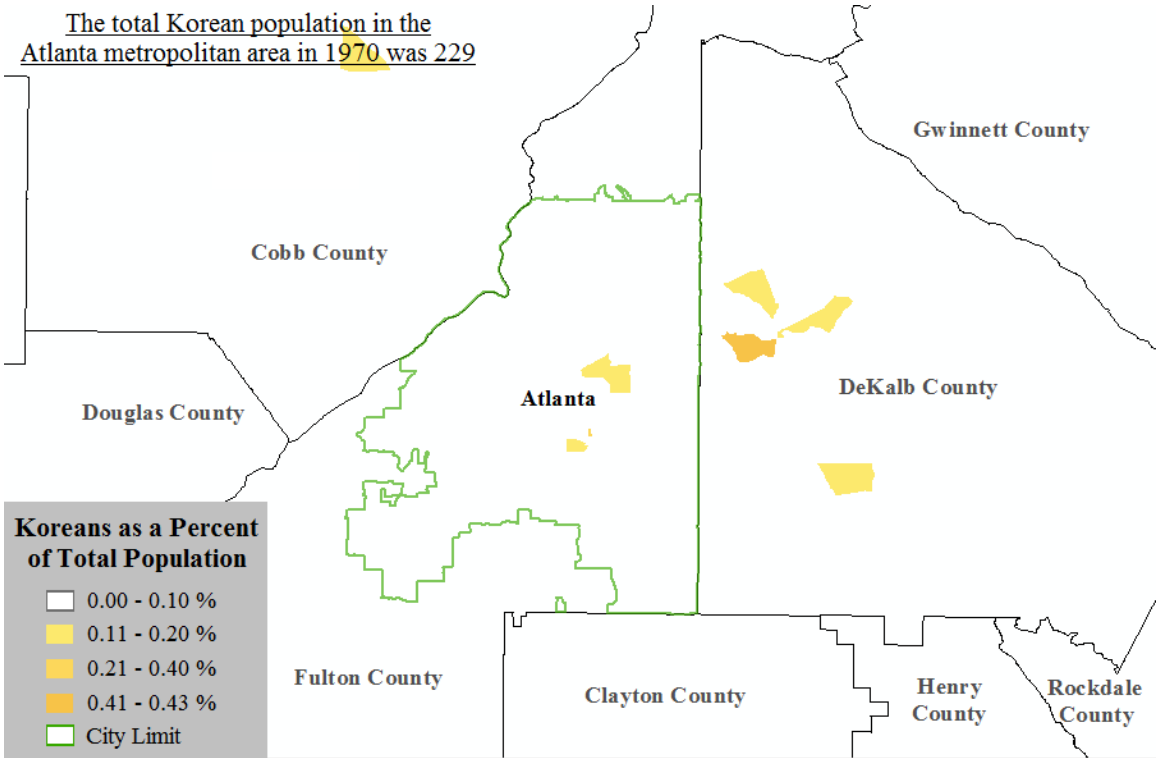
Map 20. Percentage of Population Korean in St. Louis by Census Tract, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.

immigrants also tended to be at least somewhat better off financially than ones who had come earlier. At the same time, because Chicago did not experience an extreme shortage of medical professionals during the 1960s (unlike the northeastern cities), only a small numbers of Korean physicians, nurses, and other medical professionals came to the Midwest to settle in low-income neighborhoods near the big public hospitals.

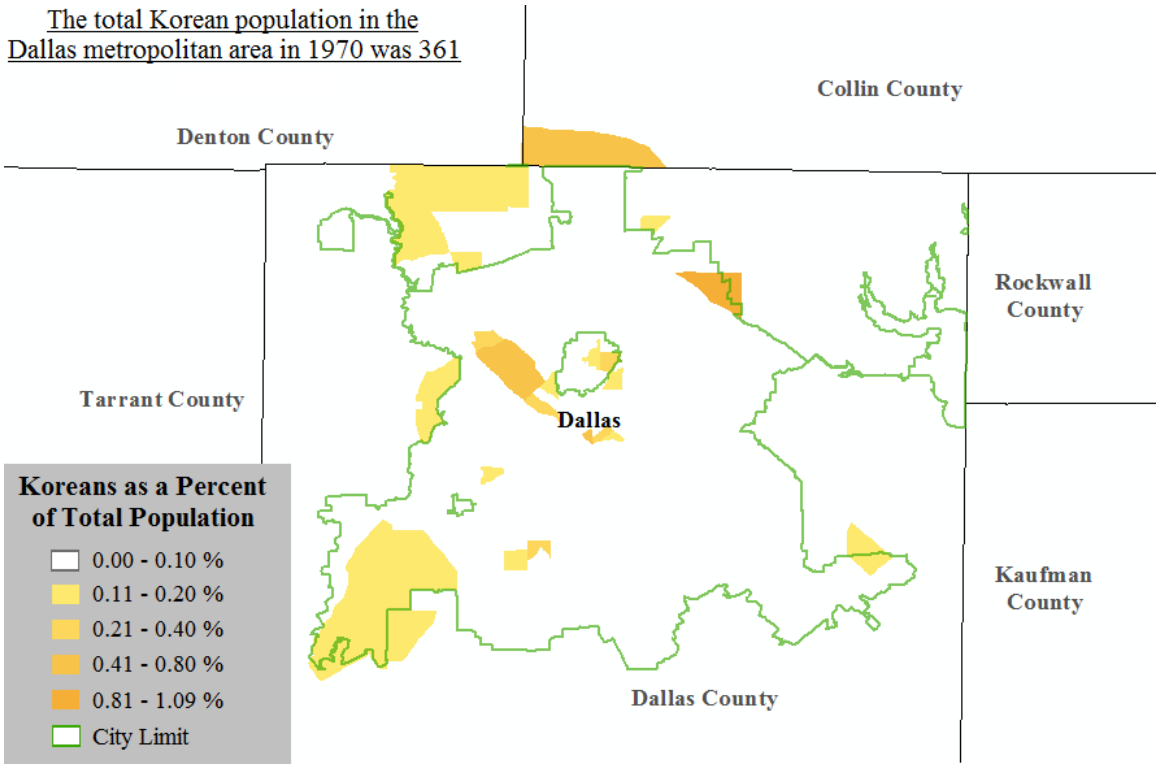
The early migration of Koreans to the Twin Cities derives from a unique circumstance: the local activism of several local adoption agencies in placing Korean children (Kim 2010, 21-22). The Children's Home Society, the second-largest private adoption agency in the U. S., was the most active of these groups. It has been estimated that that agency alone helped to place more than five thousand Korean children in new American homes from the 1950s through the 1980s. Most of these placements were in Minnesota (Adams 1993, 35).

Koreans in Southern and interior Western cities were even scarcer than in the Midwest in 1970. This fact relates to a lack of international flight connections to such locations, slow urbanization, and lack of historical and cultural connection with the Korean people. As a result, Atlanta, Dallas, Houston, and New Orleans in the South and Denver and Phoenix in the mountain region all had only minuscule Korean populations in 1970 (Maps 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, and 26).

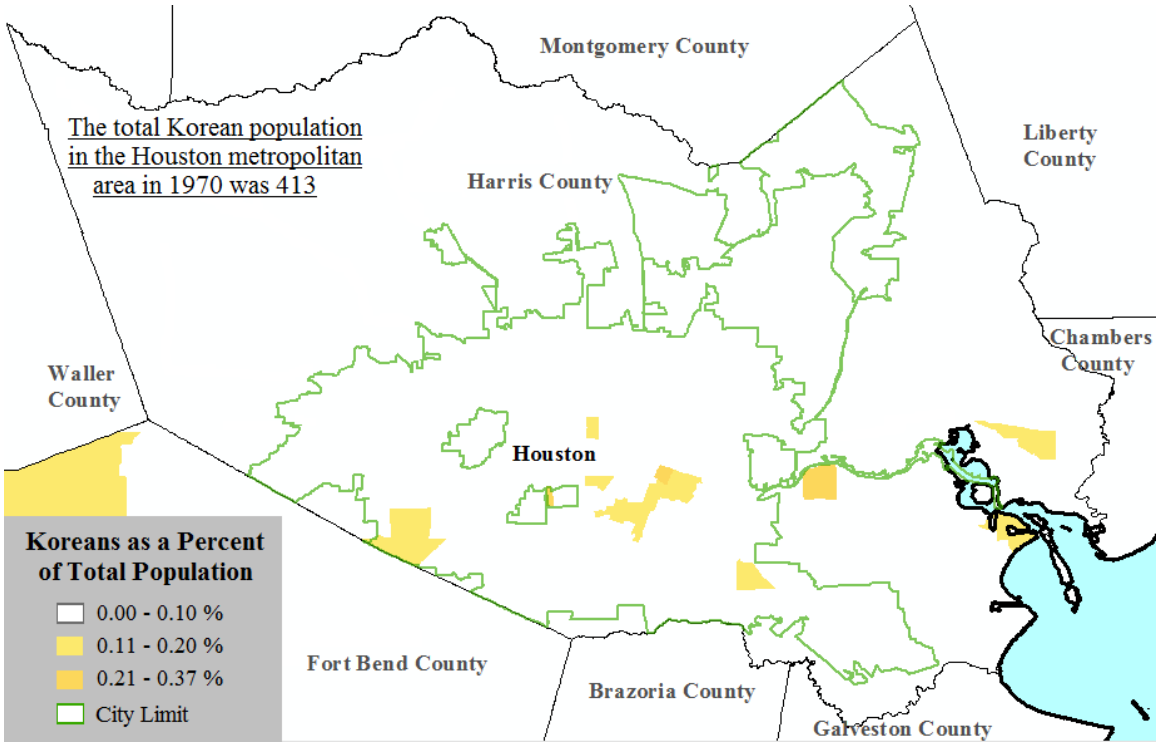
Although the Korean populations in these cities were small, the people managed to make connections among themselves and start to build local ethnic societies. Churches were among the most important social institutions. Basically, they held the local Korean peoples together, providing many services beyond religion. Since the churches were smaller, everyone knew each other and could easily exchange information. In Atlanta, for example, the ninety or so Koreans within its city limit in 1970 (including twenty-nine students and many wives of American men)



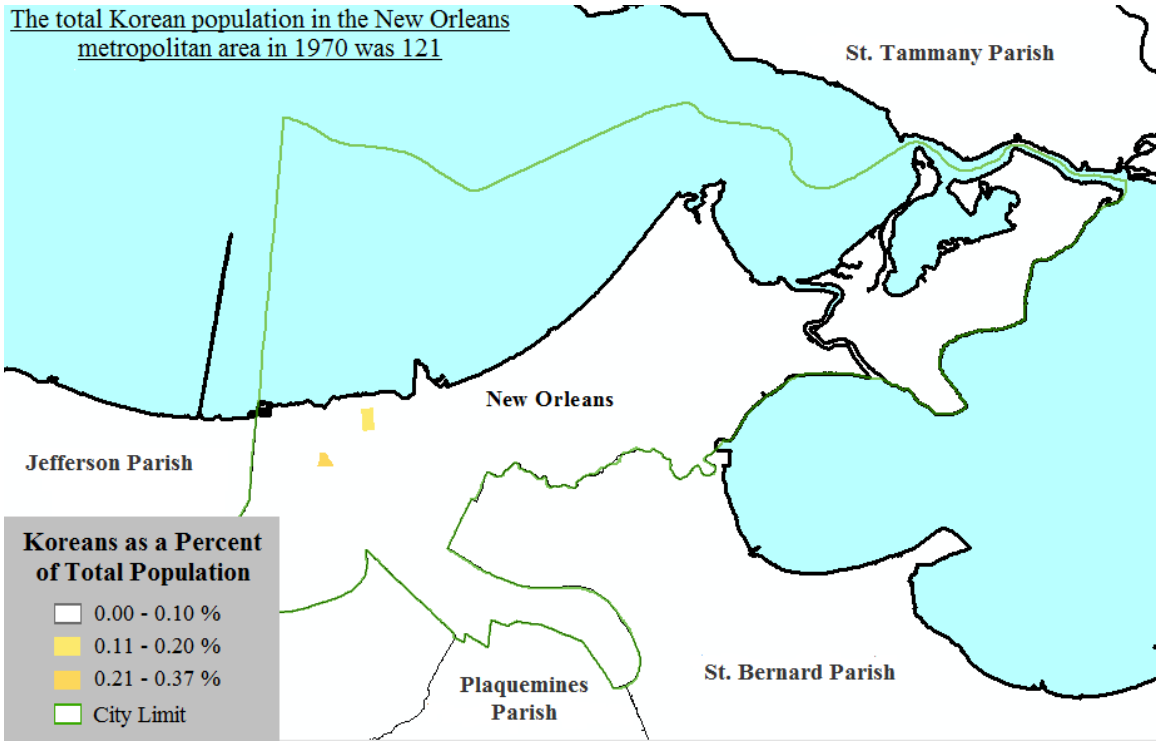
Map 21. Percentage of Population Korean in Atlanta by Census Tract, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.



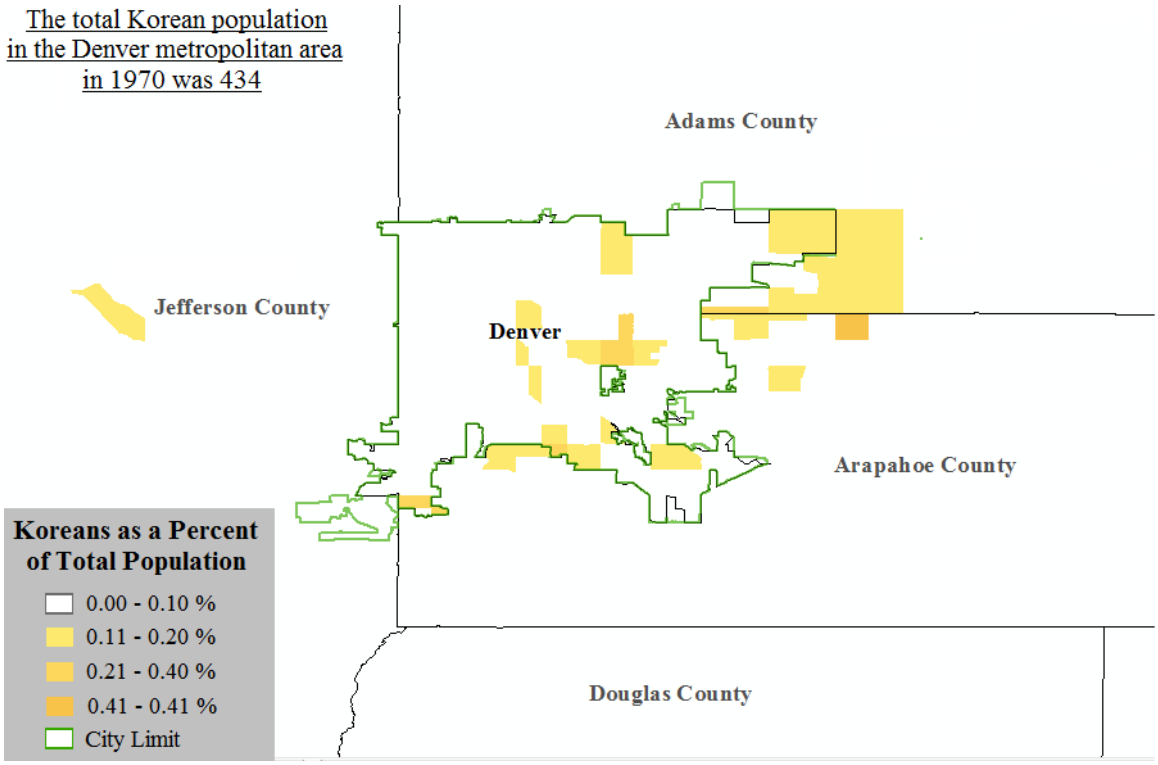
Map 22. Percentage of Population Korean in Dallas by Census Tract, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.



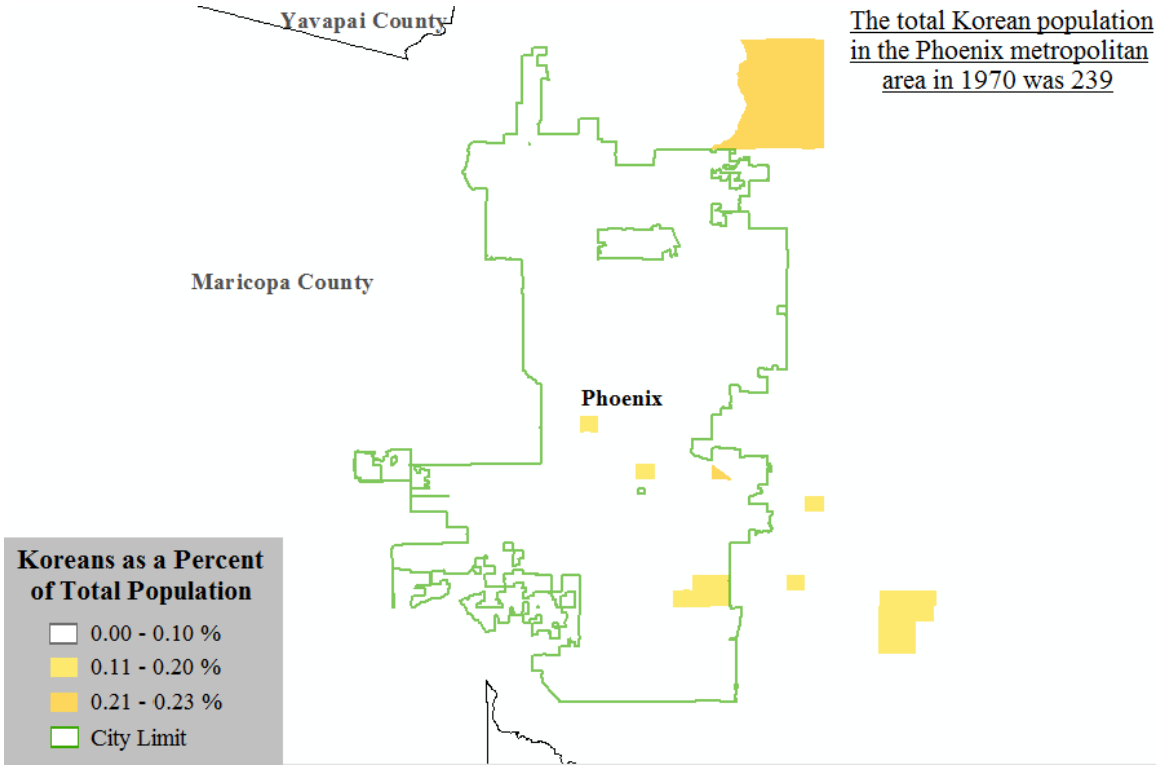
Map 23. Percentage of Population Korean in Houston by Census Tract, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.



Map 24. Percentage of Population Korean in New Orleans by Census Tract, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.



Map 25. Percentage of Population Korean in Denver by Census Tract, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.



Map 26. Percentage of Population Korean in Phoenix by Census Tract, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.

managed to establish their own church. According to one report, this congregation functioned almost like a family even though members were physically scattered throughout the metropolitan area (Lee 1975, 16-27).

Small Communities

Although only a small portion of early Korean immigrants settled in rural places, they were significant contributors to a few such communities. In fact, many of the counties with the highest percentages of Korean population in 1970 were relatively rural counties in the Midwest and South (Table 15 and Map 27). This is because of the locations the military facilities and universities.

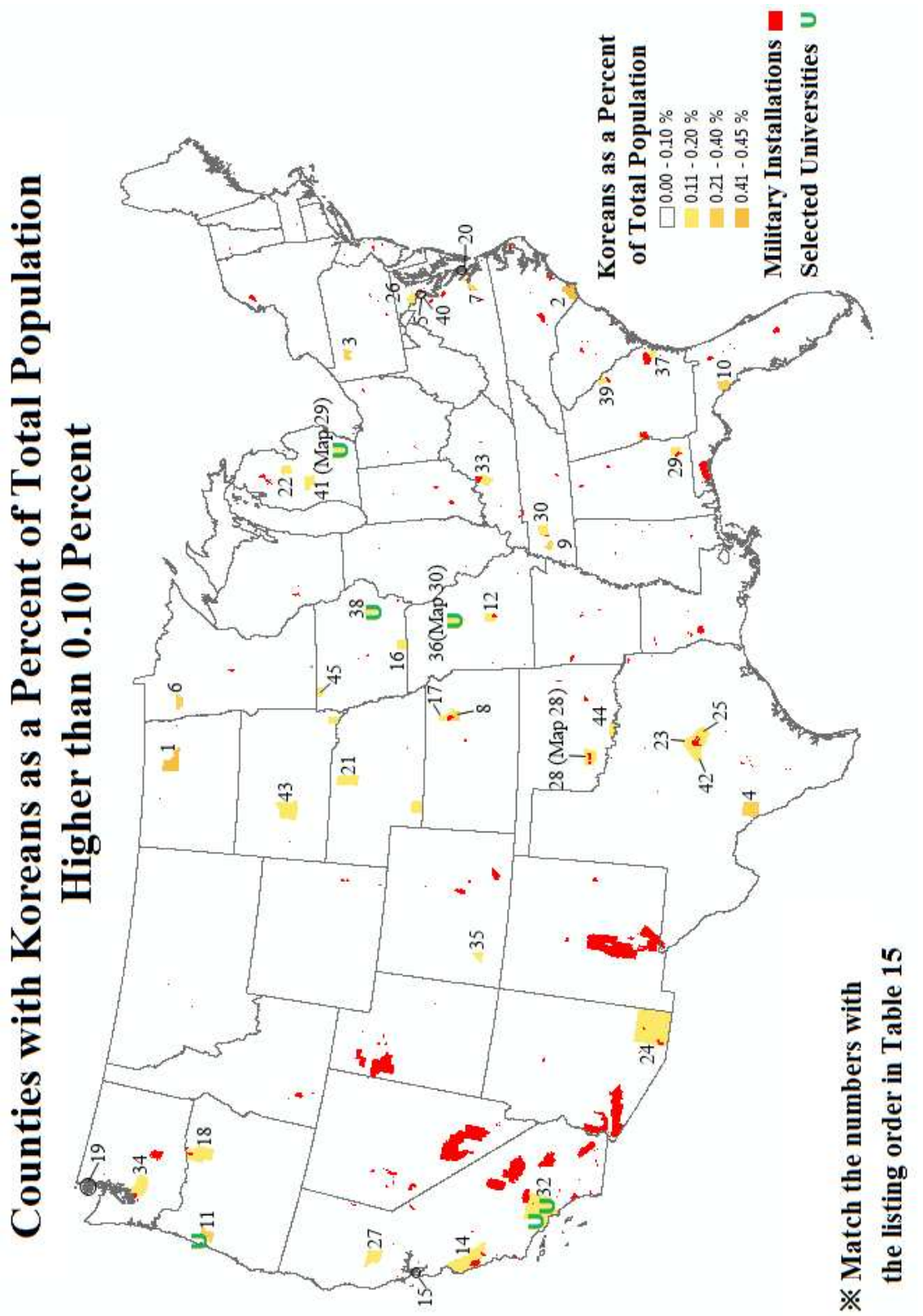
Military Communities

When the U. S. servicemen who married Korean women returned home with their families, they tended to live on or near military bases. These presences were not particularly noticeable when they were part of large cities, but often quite visible in rural regions (e. g. Map 28). Part of the distinctiveness, of course, was that Koreans in the small military counties were heavily female, while those in the larger cities were relatively even on the gender ratio (Yuh 2002, 164-165 and Table 15).

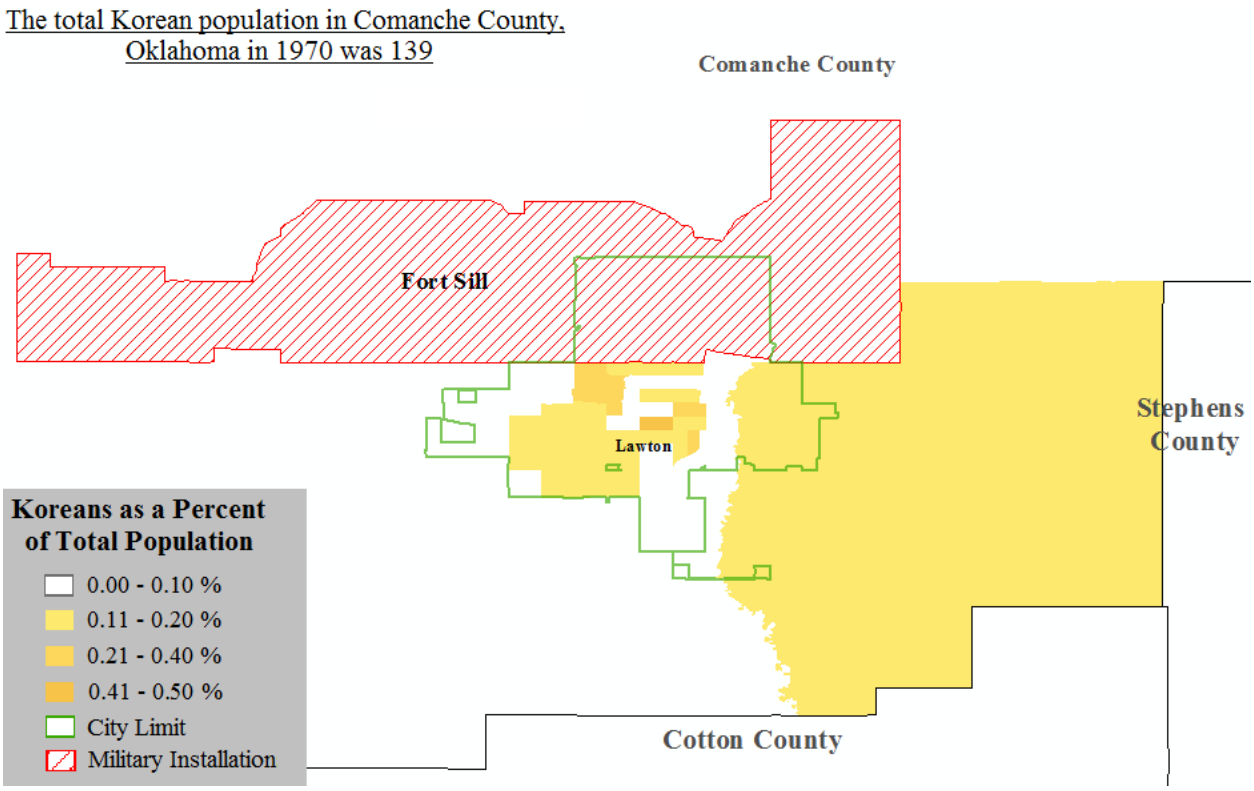
Korean immigrants to American military communities arrived mostly after the mid-1960s. For example, Junction City, Kansas, the seat of Geary County, did not have a Korean resident until 1963, when three women arrived after their husbands were transferred from South

#	County	Korean Population			Percentage			Total Pop.	% of Total Pop. Korean	Military Installation / University
		Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	total			
1	**Benson, ND**	16	21	37	43.2%	56.7%	100.0%	8,245	**0.45%**	Camp Grafton
2	**Brunswick, NC**	44	55	99	44.4%	55.6%	100.0%	24,223	**0.41%**	Ocean TML Sunny Point
3	**Forest, PA**	9	7	16	56.3%	43.7%	100.0%	4,926	**0.32%**	
4	**Kinney, TX**	4	2	6	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%	2,006	**0.30%**	
5	**Arlington, VA**	197	262	459	42.9%	57.1%	100.0%	174,284	**0.26%**	Pentagon, Fort Myer, HQMC
6	**Red Lake, MN**	14	0	14	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	5,388	**0.26%**	
7	**Prince George, VA**	25	47	72	34.7%	65.3%	100.0%	29,092	**0.25%**	Fort Lee
8	**Geary, KS**	8	59	67	11.9%	88.1%	100.0%	28,111	**0.24%**	Fort Riley
9	**Crockett, TN**	17	16	33	51.5%	48.5%	100.0%	14,402	**0.23%**	
10	**Dixie, FL**	4	8	12	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%	5,480	**0.22%**	
11	**Benton, OR**	61	50	111	55.0%	45.0%	100.0%	53,776	**0.21%**	Oregon State University
12	**Pulaski, MO**	10	85	95	10.5%	89.5%	100.0%	53,781	**0.18%**	Fort Leonard Wood
13	**Norton, VA**	5	2	7	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%	4,001	**0.17%**	
14	**Monterey, CA**	133	300	433	30.7%	69.3%	100.0%	250,071	**0.17%**	Fort Ord, Fort Hunter Ligget
15	**San Francisco, CA**	518	698	1,216	42.6%	57.4%	100.0%	715,674	**0.17%**	
16	**Wayne, IA**	7	7	14	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%	8,405	**0.17%**	
17	**Riley, KS**	35	59	94	37.2%	62.8%	100.0%	56,788	**0.17%**	Fort Riley
18	**Morrow, OR**	3	4	7	42.9%	57.1%	100.0%	4,465	**0.16%**	
19	**San Juan, WA**	5	1	6	83.3%	16.7%	100.0%	3,856	**0.16%**	
20	**James City, VA**	10	17	27	37.0%	63.0%	100.0%	17,853	**0.15%**	Camp Wallace, Camp Peary
21	**Brown, NE**	0	6	6	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	4,021	**0.15%**	
22	**Gladwin, MI**	3	17	20	15.0%	85.0%	100.0%	13,471	**0.15%**	
23	**Coryell, TX**	15	36	51	29.4%	70.6%	100.0%	35,311	**0.14%**	Fort Hood
24	**Cochise, AZ**	20	69	89	22.5%	77.5%	100.0%	61,910	**0.14%**	Fort Huachuca
25	**Bell, TX**	22	148	170	12.9%	87.1%	100.0%	124,483	**0.14%**	Fort Hood
26	**Montgomery, MD**	323	367	690	46.8%	53.2%	100.0%	522,809	**0.13%**	
27	**Colusa, CA**	11	5	16	68.8%	31.2%	100.0%	12,430	**0.13%**	
28	**Comanche, OK**	18	121	139	12.9%	87.1%	100.0%	108,144	**0.13%**	Fort Sill
29	**Dale, AL**	16	52	68	23.5%	76.5%	100.0%	52,938	**0.13%**	Fort Rucker
30	**Carroll, TN**	16	17	33	48.5%	51.5%	100.0%	25,741	**0.13%**	
31	**Hitchcock, NE**	2	3	5	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%	4,051	**0.12%**	
32	**Los Angeles, CA**	4,137	4,513	8,650	47.8%	52.2%	100.0%	7,032,075	**0.12%**	UCLA, USC
33	**Hardin, KY**	12	84	96	12.5%	87.5%	100.0%	78,421	**0.12%**	Fort Knox
34	**Pierce, WA**	105	395	500	21.0%	79.0%	100.0%	411,027	**0.12%**	Fort Lewis-McChord
35	**San Juan, CO**	0	1	1	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	831	**0.12%**	
36	**Boone, MO**	49	48	97	50.5%	49.5%	100.0%	80,911	**0.12%**	University of Missouri
37	**Liberty, GA**	8	13	21	38.1%	61.9%	100.0%	17,569	**0.12%**	Fort Stewart
38	**Johnson, IA**	44	42	86	51.2%	48.8%	100.0%	72,127	**0.12%**	University of Iowa
39	**Columbia, GA**	1	25	26	3.8%	96.2%	100.0%	22,327	**0.12%**	Fort Gordon
40	**Alexandria, VA**	51	72	123	41.5%	58.5%	100.0%	110,938	**0.11%**	Fort Belvoir
41	**Washtenaw, MI**	126	133	259	48.6%	51.4%	100.0%	234,103	**0.11%**	University of Michigan
42	**Lampasas, TX**	3	7	10	30.0%	70.0%	100.0%	9,323	**0.11%**	
43	**Haakon, SD**	1	2	3	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%	2,802	**0.11%**	
44	**Love, OK**	3	3	6	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%	5,637	**0.11%**	
45	**Osceola, IA**	5	4	9	55.6%	44.4%	100.0%	8,555	**0.11%**	

Table 15. Koreans as a Percentage of Total Population by County, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.



Map 27. Koreans as a Percentage of Total Population by County, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.



Map 28. Percentage of Population Korean in Comanche County, Oklahoma, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.

Korea to nearby Fort Riley. After 1965, as more Korean wives came to town, some also brought along a series of relatives. Jobs for these immigrants were limited, so most of them worked at Fort Riley as dishwashers, cleaners, and similar service positions (Kim 2012).

Korean women in small military towns faced more and different difficulties than did immigrants who settled in big cities. First, while the urban Koreans could help one another when they had problems, military wives regularly had to confront issues without aid because they often lived apart from one other. In addition, unlike many highly skilled and educated immigrants to the cities, many of the military wives were from small-town backgrounds and did not have much education prior to their arrivals. Most of them could not speak English fluently, and as a result, even simple tasks such as answering telephones, reading mail, and paying bills were difficult for

them (Jeong 2005). One such wife, a Mrs. Brennan, recalled that she could not speak with her husband for several years. Her husband, who had communicated with her in the Korean language in Korea, suddenly refused to speak Korean after their arrival to the U. S. His thinking was that she should speak English because it is the American way. Then, after she had learned English, he forgot how to speak Korean. In this way, their children lost the chance to learn Korean. Instead of having a bilingual family, they devolved to monolingual (Yuh 2002, 97-99).

In the 1950s and 1960s, American attitudes toward interracial marriages were not overly tolerant. This was especially true in rural communities, including military towns. As a result, many American husbands pressured their Korean wives to assimilate. Such forced behavior was often unnerving as the women had adjust their customs to American ways in a short time. A 1970s survey of Korean military wives in Oklahoma reported that many such women faced this kind of pressure. It made them feel extremely isolated, left alone even by their immediate families (Yuh 2002, 97-99).

Most Korean military wives also fell out of favor with their families back in Korea, especially if the husbands were not white. They were called forgotten daughters. Nam Soon Park, who married an African-American soldier, came to Junction City, Kansas in 1960. She told only some of her sisters and brothers about this marriage. Two other sisters still do not know this fact even four decades later and neither do the spouses of the siblings she told. Park basically did not keep in touch with her Korean family. Situations such as this can produce psychological isolation, and this probably is the biggest issue that military wives had to deal with in the early years of Korean influx to America (Kim 2004).

Although most families in Korea did not support their daughters' marriages, some kept in touch with the women because of an ulterior motive. Most U. S. servicemen in Korea were not wealthy, but many Korean parents thought that marriages between their daughters and the Americans could enrich their lives financially. This made the young Korean women's lives even more difficult. Miss Y, for example, was a business woman in Korea before she met her American husband. She worked hard to help her parents financially. After she immigrated to the U. S. after getting married, her mother in Korea almost immediately began to pressure her to send money. Her husband agreed to the initial request, but the pleas did not stop.

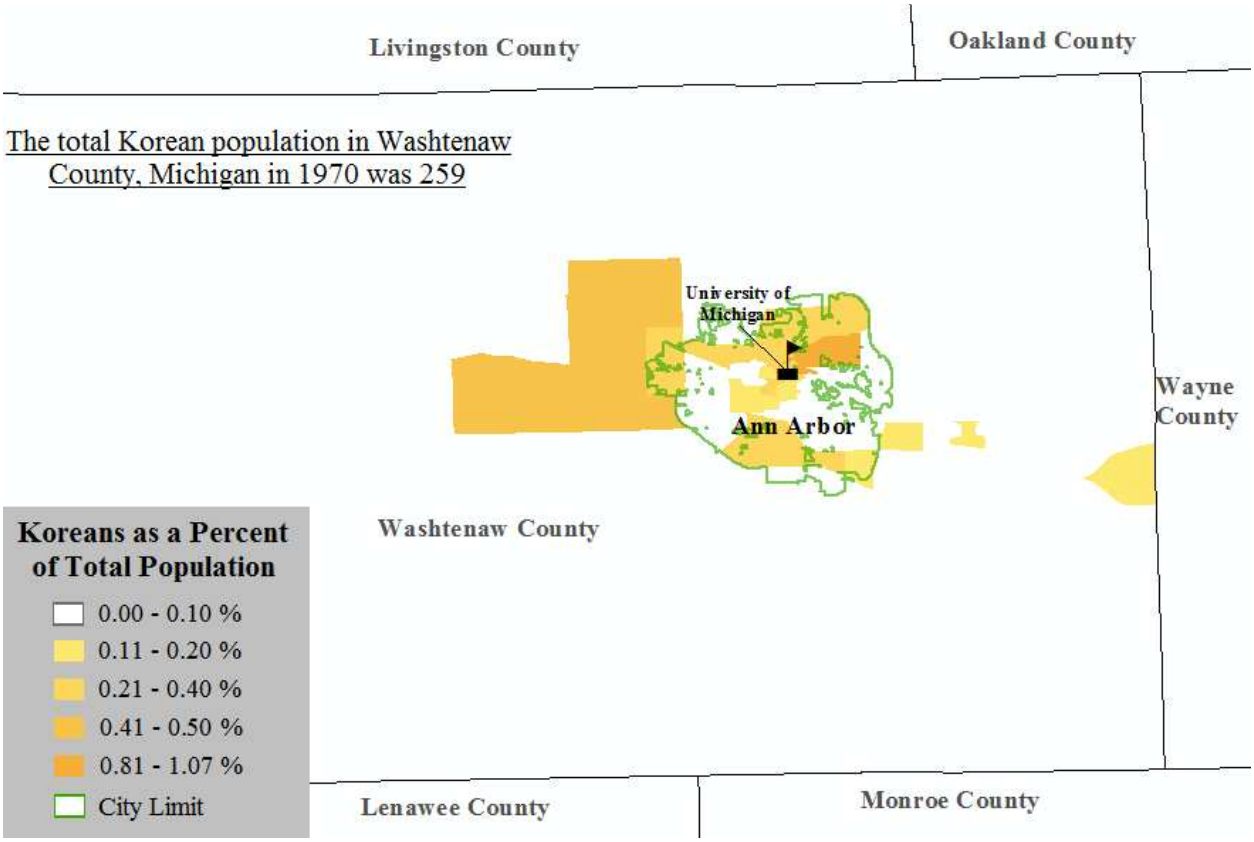
In some cases, stories such as that of Miss Y had sad endings. Ok Hee was a prostitute before meeting Joey. She admitted that she got married to escape her profession. After marriage, she asked her American husband to help her family financially. He agreed at first, and they borrowed money from a credit union. Then, when the husband later discontinued this generosity, Ok Hee got angry and cut her wrists (Ratliff 1978).

University Towns

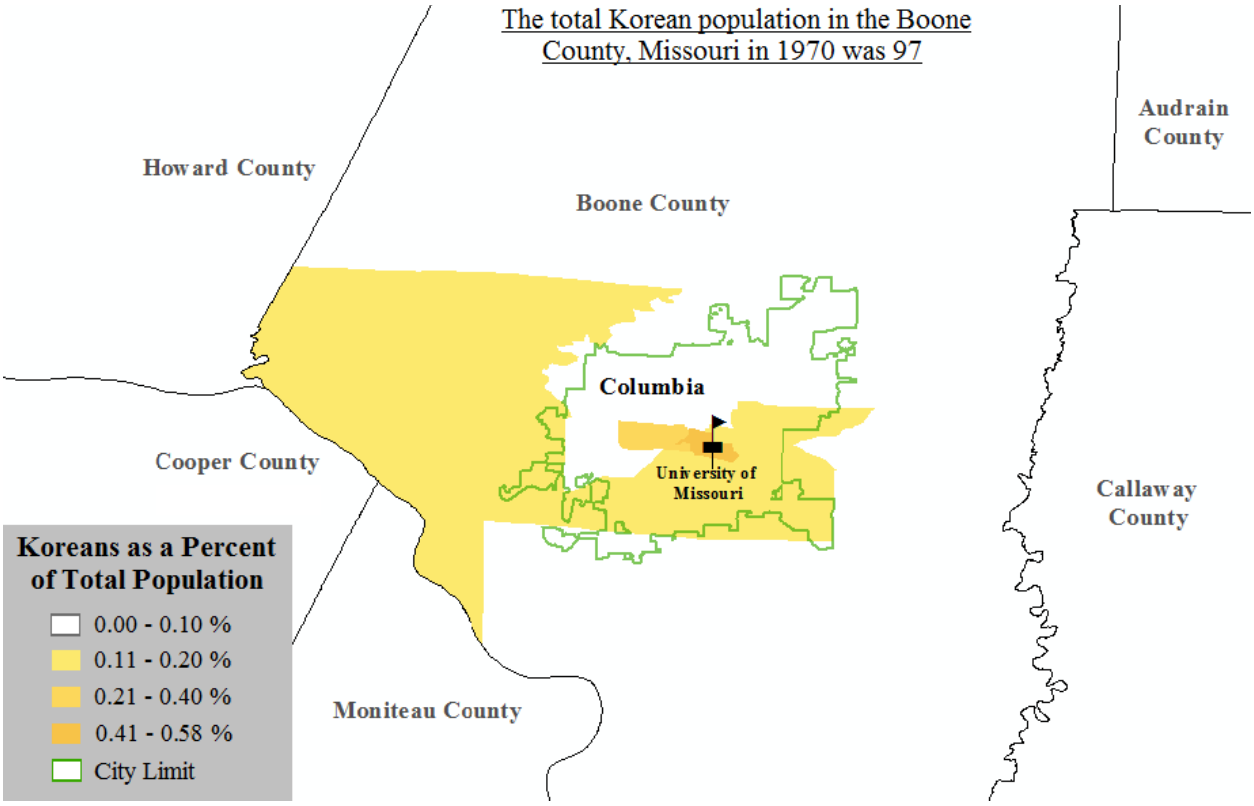
University towns across the U. S. represented a final clustering site for early Korean immigrants. People here arrived originally as students, of course, and so were regarded only as visitors. But a huge portion of them became permanent residents. Among the eight thousand or so Korean students who came to study in the U. S. between 1953 (the year that the Korean War ended) and 1970, most did not return to Korea. Details are known for the doctoral students. Of the 560 Korean students in this group, only 145 returned to Korea (Kim 2003, 55). The Korean presence in college communities is most easily observed where universities are located in less

populated counties as is often the case in the Midwest and the South. The University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and the University of Missouri at Columbia are good examples (Maps 29 and 30).

Many of the Koreans who came as students in the 1960s have become the leaders and scholars of Korean-American society today. Unlike the immigrants in the cities and military towns during the same period, these intellectuals mostly recall their youthful experiences in the U. S. as pleasant. Chong K. Lewe, for example, studied and taught in several American universities, including the University of Connecticut and the University of Maryland, between 1953 and 1965. He understood that some prejudice and discrimination against minorities existed in the society, but saw that the chances and opportunities the U. S. provided were well worth the



Map 29. Percentage of Population Korean in the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.



Map 30. Percentage of Population Korean in the University of Missouri at Columbia, Missouri, 1970. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1.

few negative experiences. He decided to stay in the U. S. where he worked between 1965 and 1990 as a nuclear engineer (Lewe 2005).

The liberalized campus environments of American college towns appealed to many Korean students who had been raised in much more restrictive environments. It was a taste of personal freedom and made them consider staying on in the new country. Even some who went back to Korea after graduation eventually returned to the U. S. The most famous case, perhaps, is K. Connie Kang, winner of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Asian-American Journalists Association (1997) and the founder and president of the Korean-American Journalists Association. She came to the U. S. to study at the University of Missouri in the 1960s (Kim, 1999, 145-148). Although she sometimes felt lonely while at school, she generally was happy

there. She went back home after her studies because her parents made that request. However, she missed America and decided that she could best pursue her dreams in that country. So in 1970, she returned to the U. S. (Kang 1995).

Chapter 7

Communities in the West Coast Cities, 1970-1992

The growth of Korean ethnic population in the U. S. accelerated in the 1970s as the number of immigrants grew to exceed thirty thousand people annually (Park 1990, 7). Between 1970 and 1980, the total Korean-American population quintupled from 69,130 to 354,593 (U. S. Census Bureau 1970 and 1980). People went to nearly every city of size, but the favorite destinations were those that already had established small Korean populations before 1970. This meant substantial growth for the West Coast cities (Table 16). Curiously, however, this concentration was not as pronounced as for other East Asian peoples, particularly the Chinese and Japanese (Table 17).

Certainly one explanation for the patterns of the 1970s was new immigrants going to where they could find assistance during their adjustment periods. Only the Korean communities in the western cities were fully established at that time. Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle each had ethnic political organizations and help centers, including the Multi-Service Center for Koreans (MSCK) in San Francisco (Choy 1979, 226) and the Korean Community Service Center (KSCS) in Seattle (*Korean Community Service Center* 2014). Korean ethnic churches were active there as well, and actually helped the new immigrants more than the formal organizations (Photo 12). In fact, no matter what their personal religion and beliefs happened to be, a large majority of newly arrived people made use of these churches. It was there that they learned the basics of American culture, obtained language help, and built business connections (Ecklund 2006, 10).

Group	City	Korean Population			Korean Pop. Growth		Percent of U. S. Total Korean			% of Korean Pop. Growth	
		1970	1980	1990	1970-1980	1980-1990	1970	1980	1990	1970-1980	1980-1990
West Coast	Los Angeles	9,345	67,012	181,350	57,667	114,338	13.5%	18.9%	22.7%	617%	171%
	Portland	476	2,907	5,871	2,431	2,964	0.7%	0.8%	0.7%	511%	102%
	San Diego	478	2,690	6,722	2,212	4,032	0.7%	0.7%	0.9%	463%	150%
	San Francisco-Oakland	2,657	10,479	23,894	7,822	13,415	3.8%	3.0%	3.0%	294%	128%
	Seattle-Tacoma	1,292	10,266	23,901	8,974	13,635	1.9%	2.9%	3.0%	695%	133%
	Total	**14,248**	**93,354**	**241,738**	**79,106**	**148,384**	**20.6%**	**26.3%**	**30.3%**	**555%**	**159%**
Interior West	Denver	434	2,844	6,960	2,410	4,116	0.6%	0.8%	0.9%	555%	145%
	Las Vegas	126	1,680	3,376	1,554	1,696	0.2%	0.5%	0.4%	1,233%	101%
	Salt Lake City	143	1,011	1,841	868	830	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	607%	82%
	San Antonio	199	1,062	2,442	863	1,380	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	434%	130%
	Phoenix	239	1,525	3,501	1,286	1,976	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%	538%	130%
	Total	**1,141**	**8,122**	**18,120**	**6,981**	**9,998**	**1.7%**	**2.3%**	**2.3%**	**612%**	**123%**
Mid west	Chicago	2,936	19,950	36,189	17,014	16,239	4.2%	5.6%	4.5%	579%	81%
	Cleveland	537	1,380	2,053	843	673	0.8%	0.4%	0.3%	157%	49%
	Detroit	961	3,972	6,571	3,011	2,599	1.4%	1.1%	0.8%	313%	65%
	Kansas City	235	1,497	2,426	1,262	929	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	537%	62%
	Milwaukee	322	1,295	1,718	973	423	0.5%	0.4%	0.2%	302%	33%
	Minneapolis-St. Paul	650	4,323	8,117	3,673	3,794	0.9%	1.2%	1.0%	565%	88%
	St. Louis	534	1,795	3,080	1,261	1,285	0.8%	0.5%	0.4%	236%	72%
	Total	**6,175**	**34,212**	**60,154**	**28,037**	**25,942**	**8.9%**	**9.6%**	**7.5%**	**454%**	**76%**
North east	Baltimore	762	6,175	12,940	5,413	6,765	1.1%	1.7%	1.6%	710%	110%
	Boston	958	3,623	8,504	2,665	4,881	1.4%	1.0%	1.1%	278%	135%
	New York	4,925	26,012	90,705	21,087	64,693	7.1%	7.4%	11.3%	428%	249%
	Philadelphia	1,656	9,663	22,028	8,007	12,365	2.4%	2.7%	2.8%	484%	128%
	Washington, D.C.	2,648	16,250	39,007	13,602	22,757	3.8%	4.6%	4.9%	514%	140%
	Total	**10,949**	**61,723**	**173,184**	**50,774**	**111,461**	**15.8%**	**17.4%**	**21.7%**	**464%**	**181%**
South	Atlanta	229	2,311	9,471	2,082	7,160	0.3%	0.6%	1.2%	909%	310%
	Dallas	361	2,511	8,963	2,150	6,452	0.5%	0.7%	1.1%	596%	257%
	Houston	413	3,428	7,200	3,015	3,772	0.6%	1.0%	0.9%	730%	110%
	Memphis	71	406	994	335	588	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	472%	145%
	Miami	169	921	1,403	752	482	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	445%	52%
	New Orleans	121	569	841	448	272	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	370%	48%
	Total	**1,364**	**10,146**	**28,872**	**8,782**	**18,726**	**2.0%**	**2.9%**	**3.6%**	**644%**	**185%**
Small Cities and Towns		**35,253**	**147,036**	**276,781**	**111,783**	**129,745**	**51.0%**	**41.5%**	**34.6%**	**317%**	**88%**
Total United States		**69,130**	**354,593**	**798,849**	**285,463**	**444,256**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**413%**	**125%**

Table 16. Korean Population Distribution in Major U. S. Cities, 1970, 1980, and 1990 and their Growth Rates. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1, 1980_STF1, NT7, and 1990_STF1, NP7.

Region	State	Population			Percent of U. S. Total		
		Korean	Chinese	Japanese	Korean	Chinese	Japanese
West	Alaska	1,536	522	1,595	0.43%	0.06%	0.23%
	Arizona	2,449	6,820	4,074	0.69%	0.85%	0.58%
	California	103,845	322,309	261,822	29.29%	39.99%	37.35%
	Colorado	5,316	3,897	9,870	1.50%	0.48%	1.41%
	Hawaii	17,962	56,285	239,748	5.07%	6.98%	34.20%
	Idaho	610	905	2,585	0.17%	0.11%	0.37%
	Montana	301	346	754	0.08%	0.04%	0.11%
	Nevada	2,057	2,979	2,315	0.58%	0.37%	0.33%
	New Mexico	706	1,442	1,286	0.20%	0.18%	0.18%
	Oregon	4,428	8,036	8,433	1.25%	1.00%	1.20%
	Utah	1,319	2,730	5,474	0.37%	0.34%	0.78%
	Washington	13,083	18,114	26,378	3.69%	2.25%	3.76%
	Wyoming	235	392	600	0.07%	0.05%	0.09%
	Total	**153,847**	**424,777**	**564,934**	**43.39%**	**52.70%**	**80.59%**
Midwest	Illinois	23,989	28,597	18,571	6.77%	3.55%	2.65%
	Indiana	3,295	3,986	2,361	0.93%	0.49%	0.34%
	Iowa	2,259	2,110	1,049	0.64%	0.26%	0.15%
	Kansas	2,627	2,425	1,585	0.74%	0.30%	0.23%
	Michigan	8,714	11,009	5,872	2.46%	1.37%	0.84%
	Minnesota	6,319	4,835	2,789	1.78%	0.60%	0.40%
	Missouri	3,519	4,280	2,649	0.99%	0.53%	0.37%
	Nebraska	993	1,106	1,378	0.28%	0.14%	0.19%
	North Dakota	342	305	230	0.10%	0.04%	0.03%
	Ohio	7,257	9,917	5,479	2.04%	1.23%	0.78%
	Oklahoma	2,698	2,461	1,975	0.76%	0.30%	0.28%
	South Dakota	258	271	262	0.07%	0.03%	0.04%
	Wisconsin	2,642	4,097	2,237	0.74%	0.51%	0.32%
	Total	**64,912**	**75,399**	**46,437**	**18.30%**	**9.35%**	**6.62%**
Northeast	Connecticut	2,116	4,691	1,864	0.60%	0.58%	0.27%
	Delaware	490	998	421	0.14%	0.12%	0.06%
	District of Columbia	338	2,476	752	0.10%	0.31%	0.11%
	Maine	481	484	336	0.13%	0.06%	0.05%
	Maryland	15,089	14,485	4,805	4.26%	1.80%	0.69%
	Massachusetts	4,655	25,015	4,483	1.31%	3.10%	0.64%
	New Hampshire	515	790	448	0.15%	0.10%	0.06%
	New Jersey	12,845	23,369	9,905	3.62%	2.90%	1.41%
	New York	34,157	148,105	24,524	9.63%	18.37%	3.50%
	Pennsylvania	12,502	13,294	4,665	3.53%	1.65%	0.67%
	Rhode Island	592	1,718	474	0.16%	0.21%	0.06%
	Vermont	288	271	227	0.08%	0.04%	0.03%
	Total	**84,068**	**235,696**	**52,904**	**23.71%**	**29.24%**	**7.55%**
South	Alabama	1,795	1,505	1,401	0.51%	0.19%	0.20%
	Arkansas	583	1,275	755	0.16%	0.16%	0.11%
	Florida	4,671	13,422	5,579	1.32%	1.67%	0.80%
	Georgia	5,968	4,324	3,368	1.68%	0.54%	0.48%
	Kentucky	2,102	1,318	1,056	0.59%	0.16%	0.15%
	Louisiana	1,729	3,298	1,482	0.49%	0.41%	0.21%
	Mississippi	576	1,835	687	0.16%	0.23%	0.10%
	North Carolina	3,581	3,176	3,186	1.01%	0.39%	0.45%
	South Carolina	1,390	1,404	1,415	0.39%	0.17%	0.20%
	Tennessee	2,237	2,909	1,657	0.63%	0.36%	0.24%
	Texas	13,997	25,461	10,502	3.95%	3.16%	1.50%
	Virginia	12,550	9,360	5,207	3.54%	1.16%	0.74%
	West Virginia	587	881	404	0.17%	0.11%	0.06%
	Total	**51,766**	**70,168**	**36,699**	**14.60%**	**8.71%**	**5.24%**
Total		**354,593**	**806,040**	**700,974**	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Table 17. Percentages of Korean, Chinese, and Japanese Populations by Regions in the U. S., 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.

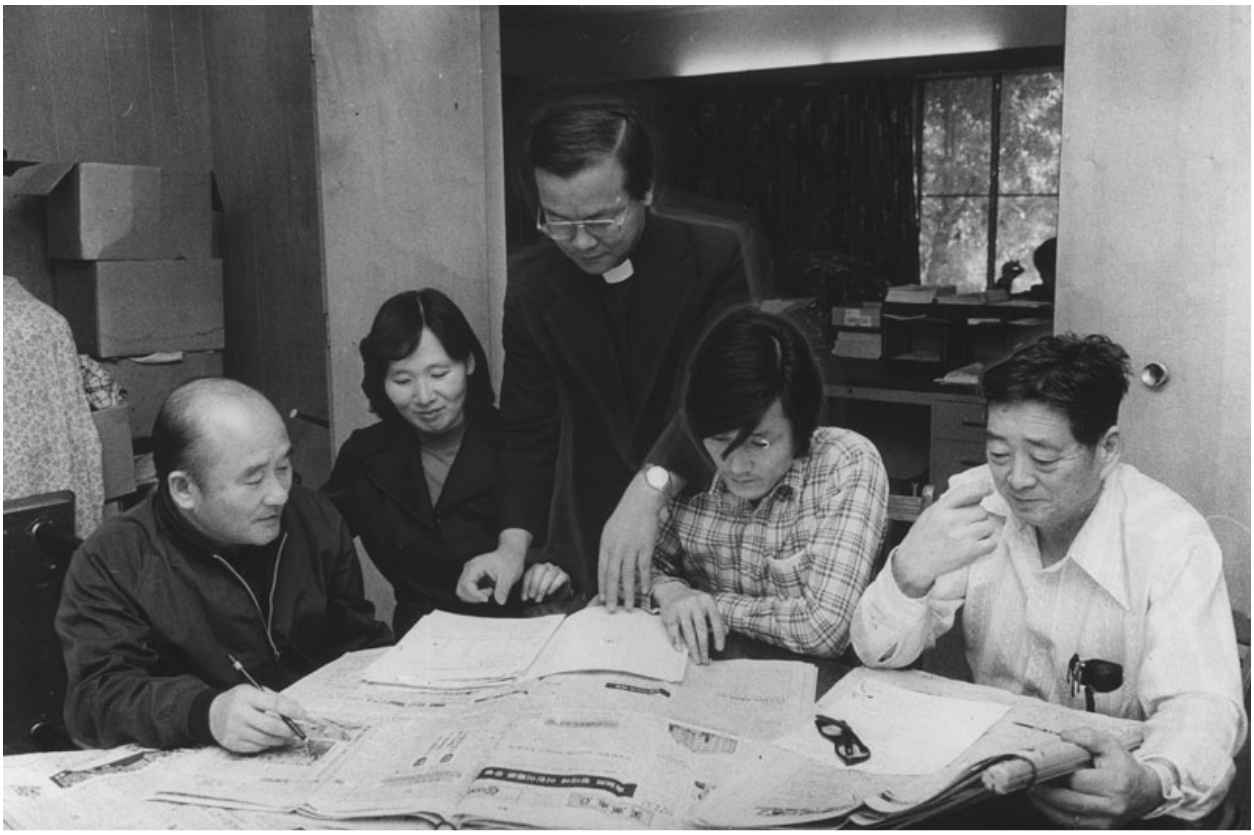


Photo 12. Father Matthew Ahn of St. Nicholas Episcopal Church, Hollywood, Helping New Korean Immigrants, August 15, 1977. Source: Los Angeles Public Library, LAPL00049282 (used with permission).

In addition, the presence of successful second- and third-generation Korean Americans in the West undoubtedly made new immigrants feel more comfortable. For example, Herbert C. Choy, who was born on Kauai, Hawaii, in 1916, served as the ninth circuit (consisted of nine Western states) judge on the U. S. Court of Appeals starting in April, 1971. He was the first person of Korean ancestry to practice law in the U. S. and the first Asian American to serve as a federal judge (Kim 1999, 72-73). Choy's presence in the western court system likely also helped immigrants to feel that they would be protected if they settled in this particular American region.

During the 1970s, the Western cities experienced not only the largest total number of immigrants, but also the fastest rate of change (Table 16). For example, Los Angeles, which had about thirteen percent of the total Korean-American population in 1970, attracted about a quarter

of all the new growth between 1970 and the 1980. This rate slowed somewhat during the 1980s as ethnic communities in the northeastern cities began to absorb more immigrants, but the West remained the single most popular destination for new Korean Americans.

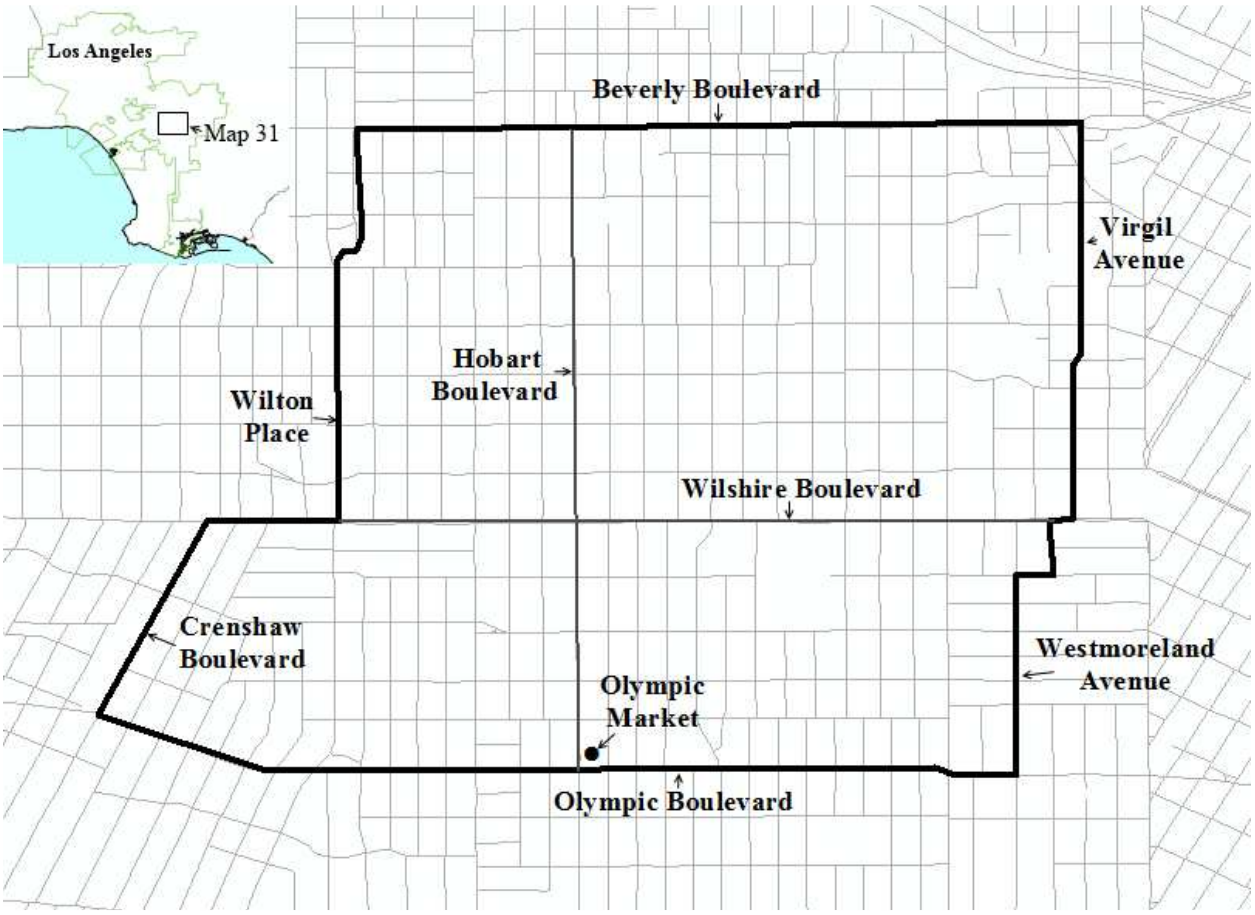
Among the West Coast cities, Los Angeles experienced the greatest Korean population growth during the 1970s. I suspect that two reasons account for this. First, as by far the largest city in the region, Los Angeles could provide more jobs than other places. This was an important criterion because economic opportunity was the primary motivation for Korean immigration. In addition, most Koreans probably wanted to avoid competitions with other Asian immigrants over limited entry-level jobs in smaller cities. In Los Angeles, the Korean population came close to rivaling the size of the other Asian groups. Elsewhere, in other Western cities, Koreans were much less represented (Table 18).

	City	Korean	Chinese	Japanese	Total Population
Population	Los Angeles	67,012	106,113	126,586	9,410,212
	Portland	2,907	4,836	4,421	1,105,699
	San Diego	2,690	8,591	12,656	1,861,846
	San Francisco-Oakland	10,479	132,001	36,673	3,250,630
	Seattle	6,048	13,571	16,661	1,607,469
Percent of U.S. Total	Los Angeles	0.71%	1.13%	1.35%	100.00%
	Portland	0.26%	0.44%	0.40%	100.00%
	San Diego	0.14%	0.46%	0.68%	100.00%
	San Francisco-Oakland	0.32%	4.06%	1.13%	100.00%
	Seattle	0.38%	0.84%	1.04%	100.00%

Table 18. Korean, Chinese, and Japanese Populations in Major West Coast Cities, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.

Southern California

During the late 1960s and 1970s, when business boomed along Los Angeles' Wilshire Boulevard, many Korean immigrants settled at this location to seek economic opportunities. This movement was started by Hui Duk Lee, a descendant of the royal family of Korea's Choseon Dynasty (1392-1897), who arrived to Los Angeles in 1968 (Kim 2011, 83) and opened the Olympic Market at the corner of Olympic Boulevard and Hobart Boulevard in 1969 (Map 31). Over the next few years, other Korean shops appeared along Olympic between Crenshaw and Westmoreland avenues, and then in 1973, Lee and other investors created the Koreatown Development Association. Lee himself was named director (Yu 1985).

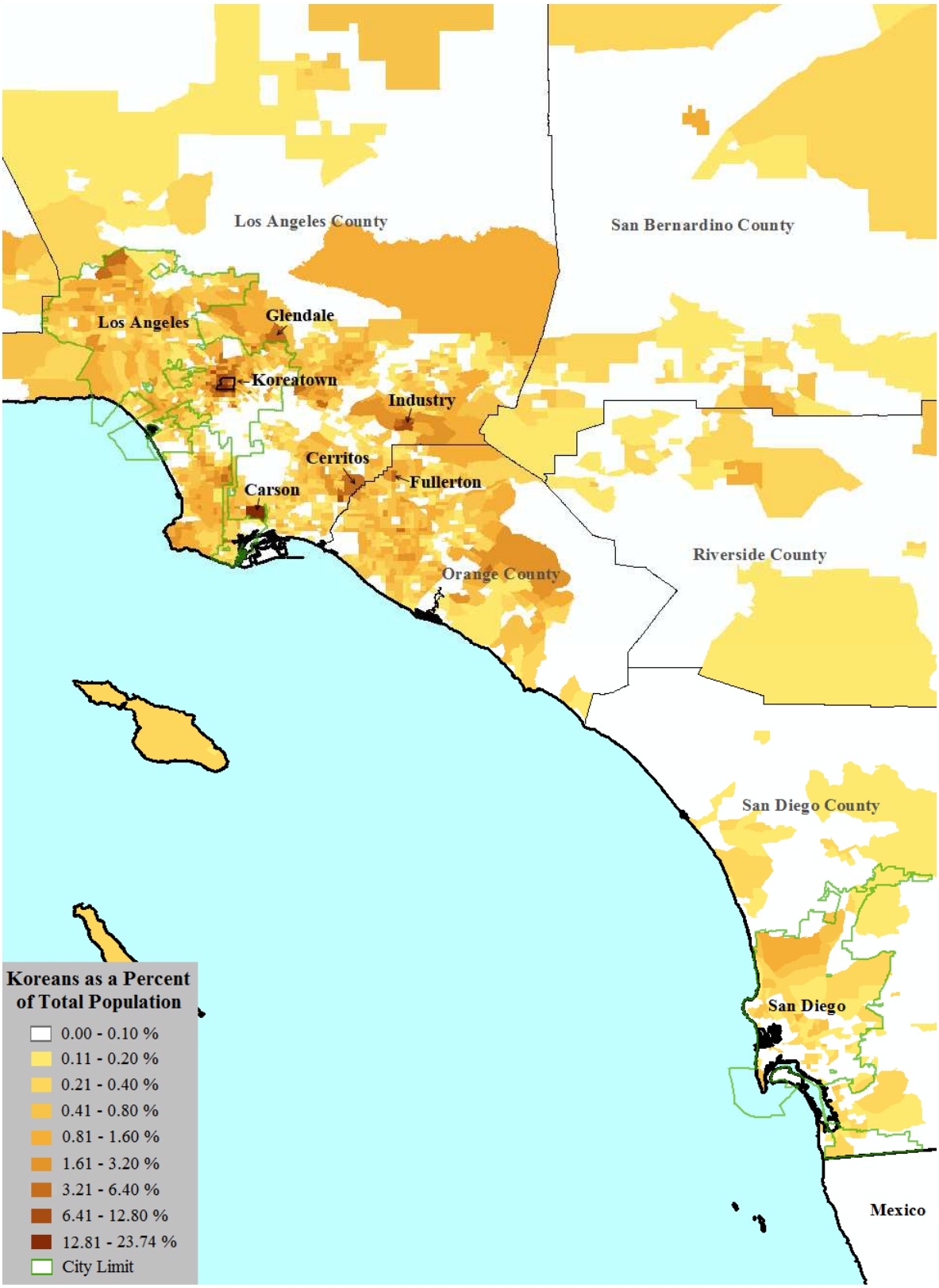


Map 31. Los Angeles's Koreatown. Source: *Los Angeles Times*, http://maps.latimes.com/neighborhoods/neighborhood/koreatown/.

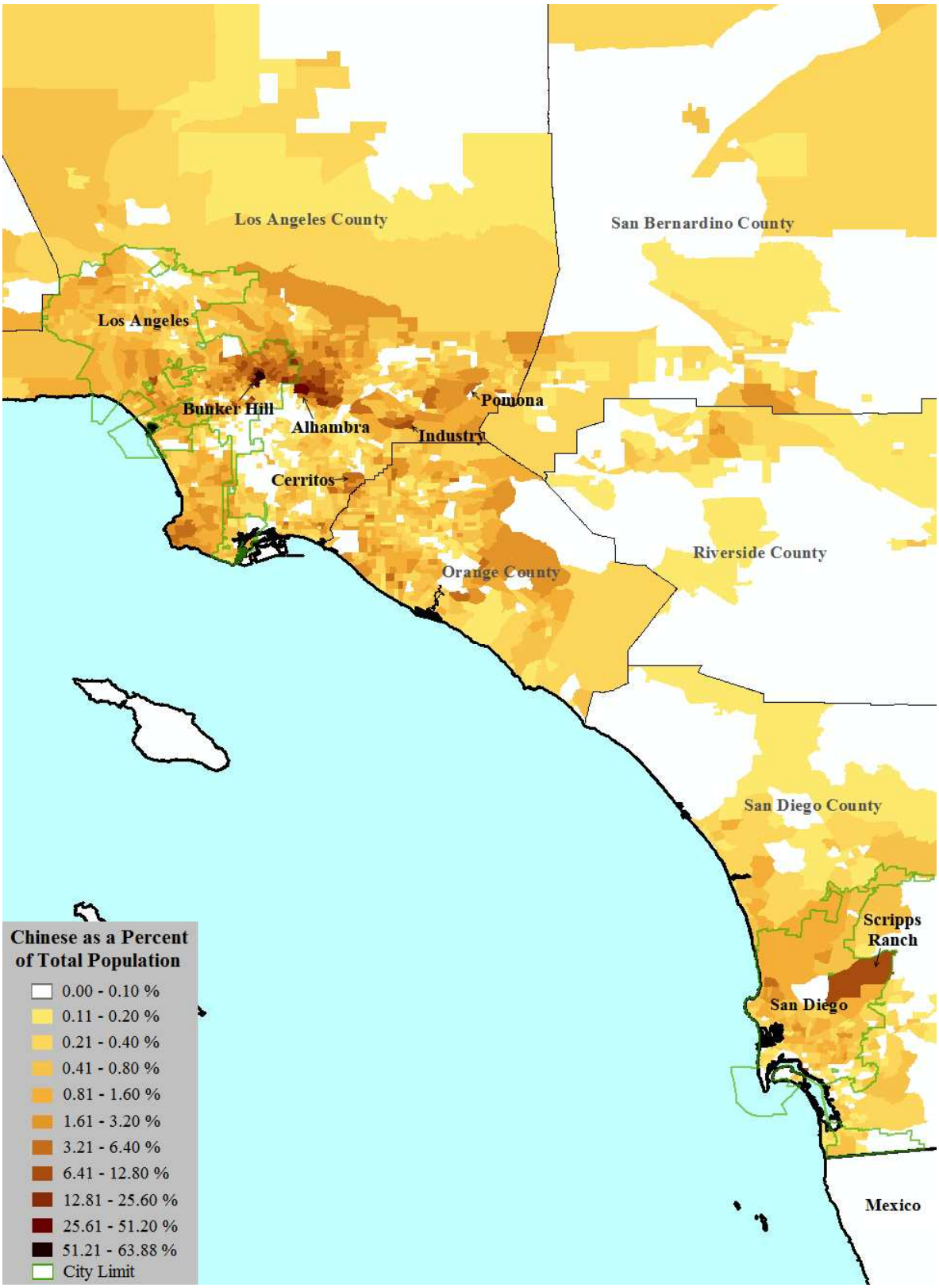
Lee's enterprise grew steadily until a large majority of the district's residences were Koreans by the mid-1970s. This new reality was recognized in 1978 when the Los Angeles City Council officially designated the area as "Koreatown" (Jones-Correa 2001, 94). Although certainly an appropriate designation, this proclamation ignored several other locations in Los Angeles County (Carson, Cerritos, Glendale, and Industry), Orange County (Fullerton), and San Diego that had sizeable ethnic concentrations as well (Map 32).

The multicentered dispersion of the Los Angeles Koreans stands somewhat in contrast to the Chinese and Japanese who showed less interest in resettlement. Most Chinese in 1980 still lived in their familiar Bunker Hill neighborhood, and while no clear ethnic core existed for Japanese (Maps 33 and 34). This geographic pattern of Japanese is probably related to immigration history. Unlike the Koreans and the Chinese in America, most Japanese immigrants were farmers and tried to remain in that occupation in the U. S. Although many moved to cities after losing their farmlands following of the infamous internment procedures during World War II, the Japanese were the least urbanized Asian ethnic group in the U. S. (Matsumoto 1993). As a result, the Japanese population in Los Angeles was not clearly concentrated in urban districts even in the 1980s.

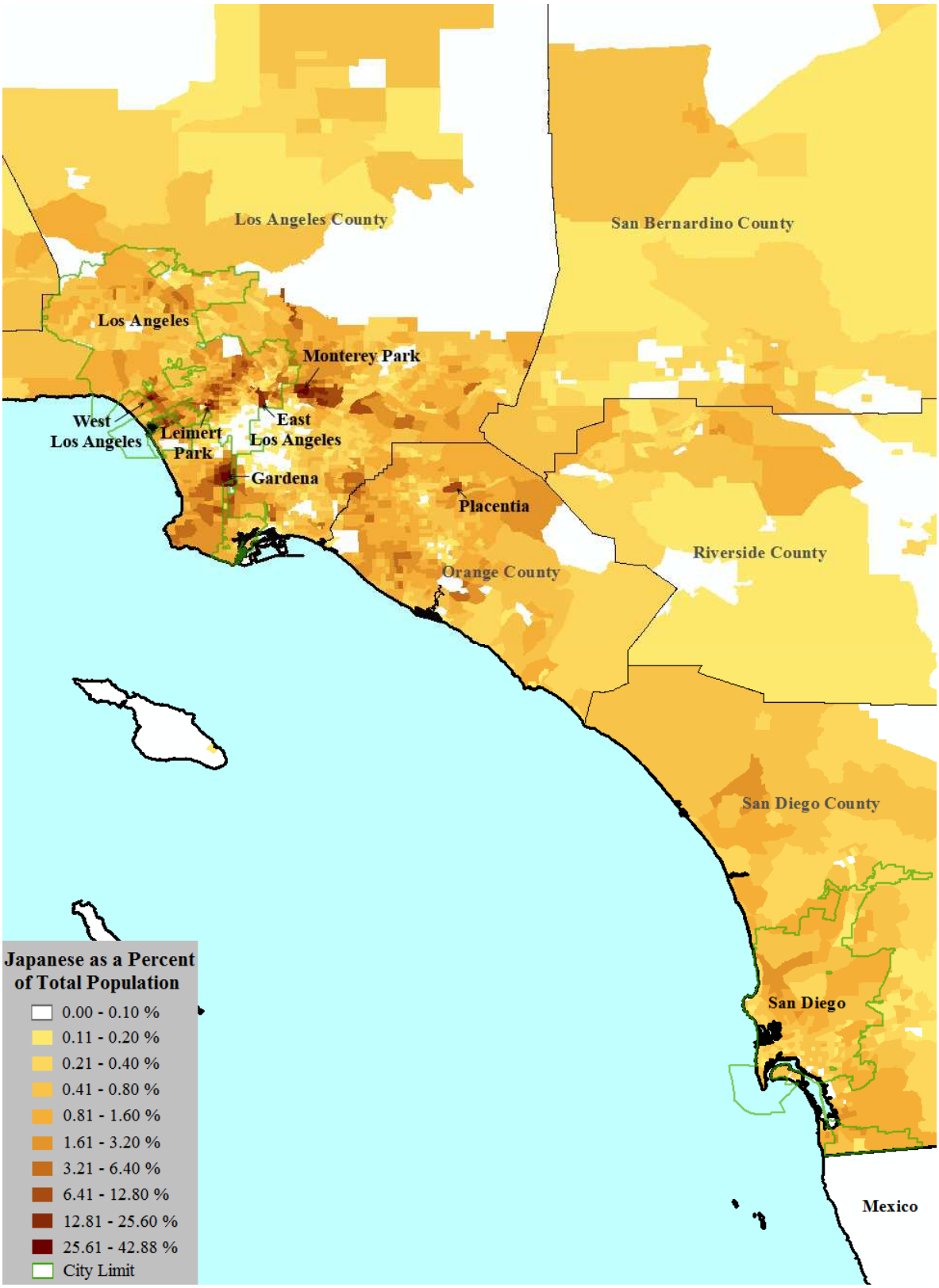
South of Los Angeles, the modest Korean population present in San Diego in 1970 almost tripled over next decade (Maps 32 and 35). This growth can be best be interpreted as a population extension from nearby Orange County. Just as Los Angeles Koreans had spilled over into Orange County in the 1970s seeking business opportunities, so Los Angeles and Orange County people did the same into the San Diego area starting in the late 1980s. San Diego had 6,722 Korean residents by 1990, nearly all located within the city limits or in nearby suburbs along the coast.



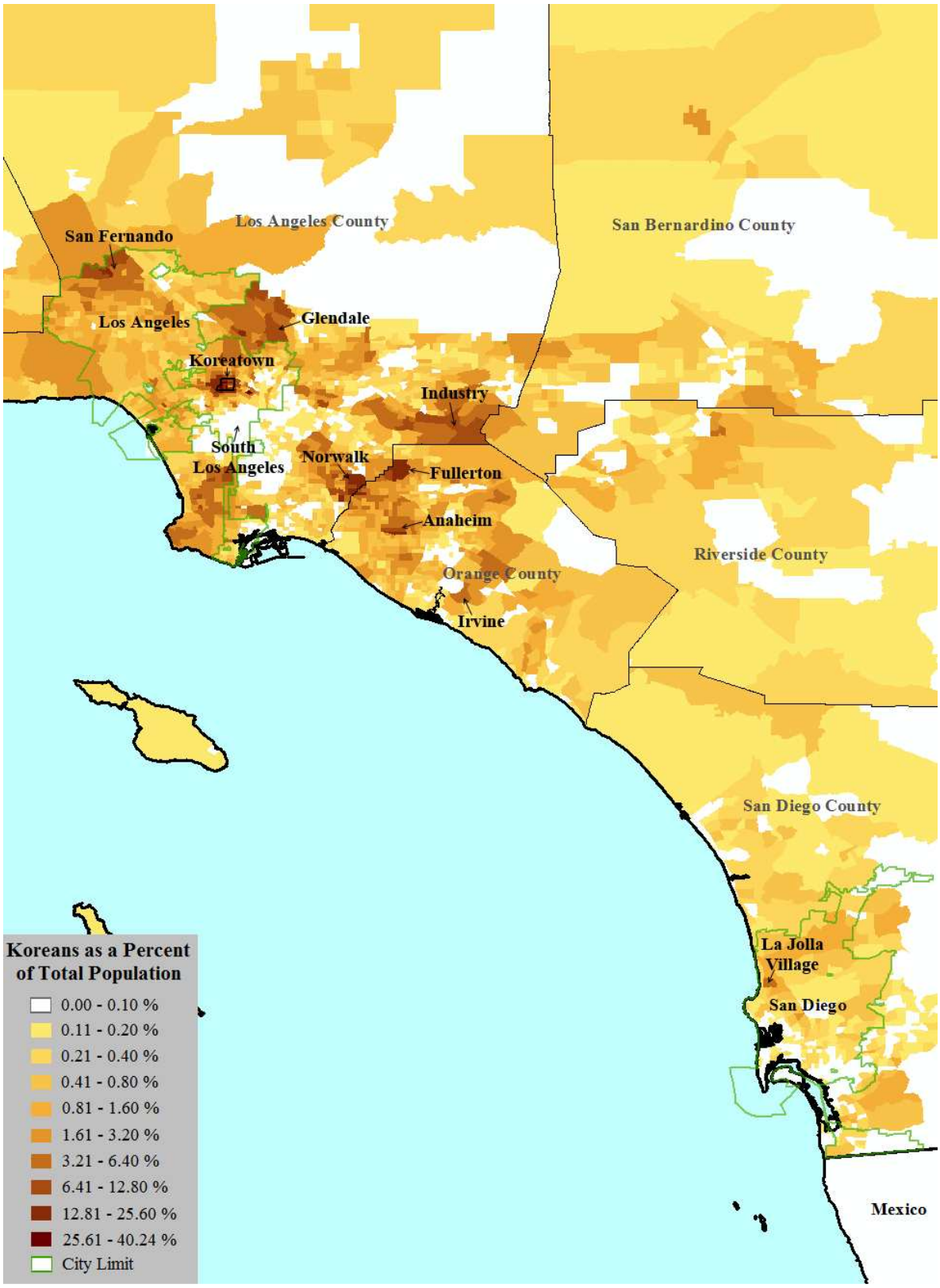
Map 32. Percentage of Population Korean in Southern California by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.



Map 33. Percentage of Population Chinese in Southern California by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.



Map 34. Percentage of Population Japanese in Southern California by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.



Map 35. Percentage of Population Korean in Southern California by Census Tract, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.

As the population in Los Angeles's Koreatown grew large in the 1970s, it became thriving ethnic center in its own right, a Korean cultural island in the middle of a American city. A 1974 survey revealed that ninety-two percent of the eleven thousand Koreans in the district were post-1965 immigrants and that over sixty percent of the adults there held four-year university diplomas (Yu 1977). Rather than being forced to assimilate to the mainstream society, Koreatown people now could socialize easily with kinsmen. Many residents did not even try to learn English, even those who were highly educated. In 1980, for example, less than forty percent of the Koreans in Los Angeles could speak English fluently while the percentages for Chinese and Japanese in the city were much higher (Table 19). This pattern continued even until a decade later (Table 20).

Daniel Jung, a son of a local liquor store owner who was born and raised in the U. S., was one of those who grew up speaking Korean at home. Although he has aunts and uncles who have lived in Southern California for many years, all of them communicate with him and each

	Ethnicity	Speak English Only	Speak Foreign Language at home				Total
			Speak English very well	Speak English Well	Speak English Not Well	Speak English Not At All	
Population	**Korean**	9,124	15,710	20,000	18,011	4,167	67,012
	Chinese	17,380	32,792	27,393	20,236	8,312	106,113
	Japanese	59,612	29,012	21,382	14,626	1,954	126,586
Percentage	**Korean**	13.61%	23.44%	29.85%	26.88%	6.22%	100.00%
	Chinese	16.39%	30.90%	25.81%	19.07%	7.83%	100.00%
	Japanese	47.09%	22.92%	16.89%	11.55%	1.54%	100.00%

Table 19. Language Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English by Korean, Chinese, and Japanese Peoples in Los Angeles, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF4Pa, NTPA18.

	Ethnicity	Speak English Only	Speaking Foreign Language at home				Total
			Speak English very well	Speak English Well	Speak English Not Well	Speak English Not At All	
Population	**Korean**	25,626	52,077	46,900	44,690	12,057	181,350
	Chinese	44,061	90,165	79,323	51,708	21,179	286,436
	Japanese	81,804	34,304	23,927	17,446	1,959	159,440
Percentage	**Korean**	14.13%	28.72%	25.86%	24.64%	6.65%	100.00%
	Chinese	15.39%	31.48%	27.69%	18.05%	7.39%	100.00%
	Japanese	51.30%	21.52%	15.01%	10.94%	1.23%	100.00%

Table 20. Language Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English by Korean, Chinese, and Japanese Peoples in Los Angeles, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF4a, NPA25.

other in Korean. Daniel's Korean language skills are not perfect, however because his native language is English and he was educated in American schools. As a result, he sometimes had issues talking to his mom, resulting in numerous arguments (Lee 2008, 119-121).

As I discussed in the previous chapter, some of the early Koreans in Los Angeles elected to start small businesses so as to avoid bigger companies that sometimes discriminated in their hiring practices (Ingram 2007, 26). Open discrimination of this sort ended in Los Angeles after the 1965 African-American riots in Watts (Kim 2011, 9), and so one might expect to see Koreans after this time working for major corporations. Instead, the Koreans stayed with their small-business model, believing that, although it had many risks, it also offered great economic potential. As soon as they had accumulated even a small amount of money, Korean after Korean started their own business. This trend was not unique to Koreans, of course, but among Asian groups in the U.S. at that time, Koreans owned much higher number of small businesses than most (Table 21). The Koreans in Los Angeles and its Koreatown followed this national pattern,

but with more emphasis on the service area rather than retail trade (Table 22).

	Category	Korean	Chinese	Filipino	Indian	Japanese
Number	Agriculture	131	144	286	59	5,409
	Construction	267	409	249	86	1,042
	Finance	235	1,638	789	312	1,730
	Manufacturing	191	632	118	90	650
	Retail Trade	3,766	9,621	1,765	1,465	6,589
	Services	3,286	9,025	5,585	4,549	9,779
	Transportation	210	342	288	111	585
	Wholesale Trade	209	757	140	299	655
	Other	209	702	305	213	942
	Total	8,504	23,270	9,525	7,184	27,381
Percentage	Agriculture	1.54%	0.62%	3.00%	0.82%	19.75%
	Construction	3.14%	1.76%	2.61%	1.20%	3.81%
	Finance	2.76%	7.04%	8.28%	4.34%	6.32%
	Manufacturing	2.25%	2.72%	1.24%	1.25%	2.37%
	Retail Trade	44.29%	41.35%	18.53%	20.39%	24.06%
	Services	38.64%	38.78%	58.64%	63.32%	35.71%
	Transportation	2.47%	1.47%	3.02%	1.55%	2.14%
	Wholesale Trade	2.46%	3.25%	1.47%	4.16%	2.39%
	Other	2.45%	3.01%	3.21%	2.97%	3.45%
	Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 21. Numbers of Business Enterprises Owned by Selected Asian Groups in the U. S., 1977. Source: The Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1977 Economic Censuses: Survey of Minority-Owned Business Enterprises, Table 2.

	Category	Koreatown	Los Angeles C.	United States
Number	Agriculture	0	0	131
	Construction	15	45	267
	Finance	66	146	235
	Manufacturing	7	66	191
	Retail Trade	364	1,167	3,766
	Services	451	992	3,286
	Transportation	24	63	210
	Wholesale Trade	45	192	209
	Other	0	0	209
	Total	972	2,671	8,504
Percentage	Agriculture	0.0%	0.0%	1.54%
	Construction	1.5%	1.7%	3.14%
	Finance	6.8%	5.5%	2.76%
	Manufacturing	0.7%	2.5%	2.25%
	Retail Trade	37.4%	43.7%	44.29%
	Services	46.5%	37.1%	38.64%
	Transportation	2.5%	2.3%	2.47%
	Wholesale Trade	4.6%	7.2%	2.46%
	Other	0.0%	0.0%	2.45%
	Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 22. Numbers of Business Enterprises Owned by the Koreans in Koreatown and Los Angeles County, 1979 and the U. S., 1977. Source: Light and Bonacich 1988, 208 and United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1977 Economic Censuses: Survey of Minority-Owned Business Enterprises, Table 2.

Imjung Kwuon, who moved to Los Angeles in 1962 with her family when she was four, recalled that she was immediately placed in a nursery school so that both of her parents could

work. They did so throughout her youth. Her father tried at all sorts of small businesses, including imports, exports, selling wigs, and doing dry cleaning. Although he never made big money, he kept working hard and even drafted young Kwuon to help. After her father sorted the imported wigs according to color in his little office, it was her job to deliver the hair pieces to African-American shops nearby (Kim and Yu 1996, 43)

Surprisingly, at least at first glance, the wig business was popular for many of the first Koreans in Los Angeles. There were two reasons for this. First, a large customer market existed in South Los Angeles, an African-American neighborhood just south of Koreatown. During the 1960s and 1970s, African Americans consumed about one-third of all wigs sold in the U. S. Plus, it was easy to operate an African-American hair business during the period because customers tended to look for cheap prices rather than quality (Chin 1996).

The second reason the wig business was good concerned supply. At the time Imjung Kwuon was helping in her father's business, South Korea was the second-largest producer of wigs in the world, behind only Hong Kong. Then, starting in 1972, Korea took the lead because of a combination of cheap labor costs and government aid during the political administration of Park Chung Hee. Ethnic and family ties naturally meant that Koreans in the U. S. could import wigs at good prices and in large amounts. In addition, Los Angeles had better transportation links to East Asia than other cities in the U. S (Chin 1996).

A boom resulted. Many local Koreans entered the wig trade with hopes of making fortunes. In 1972, they owned fifty-seven shops in Los Angeles. By 1975, this number had increased to a hundred and fifty-two. Although this particular business did not grow much locally after that point because of market saturation, its early success led to a general enthusiasm of the immigrants for small businesses of all types (Chin 1996).

In the 1970s, Koreans in Los Angeles started all sorts of small businesses. The most popular categories included food (grocery stores, restaurants); automobile (vehicle sales, parts sales, repair services, gas stations); and apparel (manufacturing and sales). By 1975, the total number of Korean-owned businesses in Los Angeles was 612, with 492 of these in the food, apparel and automobile categories. Ten years later, these numbers had tripled (Lee 2008).

The Korean food businesses in Los Angeles, especially restaurants, were concentrated in and around Koreatown throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Their sales were mostly to other Korean peoples, with the restaurants serving ethnic foods and the grocers stocking mainly Asian products (Photo 13). Olympic Boulevard was the prime business address, and nearly all the small shops along this street were Korean owned (Photo 14). In case of Olympic Plaza, a minimall at the intersection of Genesee Avenue, all the business signs were written in Korean, making the ethnic dominance look complete (Photo 15).

Photo 13. A Grocer on Olympic Boulevard Arranges Kimchi, a Popular Korean Food, 1977. Source: Los Angeles Public Library, LAPL00033012 (used with permission).

Photo 14. Looking East on Olympic Boulevard at Normandie in Koreatown, September 1987. Source: Los Angeles Public Library, LAPL00074353 (used with permission).

Photo 15. The Sign Board of Olympic Plaza on Olympic Boulevard at Genesee in Koreatown, 1988. Source: Los Angeles Public Library, LAPL00074335 (used with permission).

As the Koreans became successful in their new city within a city, they started to celebrate their culture more broadly. Parades became common on traditional holidays, for example, with special customs and music (Photo 16). The people also volunteered to clean their neighborhood on regular basis (Photo 17). It was becoming a true home.

Many Koreans did business outside of the Koreatown as well, especially after 1980. They simply went wherever they perceived an underserved market. By 1985, their businesses other than restaurants had spread throughout Los Angeles (Lee 2008). Approximately one-fourth of their customers were African American and another fourth Hispanic (Light and Bonacich 1988). Gasoline stations had especially high concentrations in African-American and Hispanic neighborhoods where the Koreans found they could purchase sites at half the cost of

Photo 16. Women Performing the Traditional Farmers' Dance During a Parade in Koreatown, 1977. Source: Los Angeles Public Library, LAPL00033013 (used with permission).

Photo 17. Two Hispanic Men Watching a Korean Sweep-In Beautification Program at a Bus Stop on Olympic Boulevard, December 7, 1980. Source: Los Angeles Public Library, LAPL00074358 (used with permission).

those in Koreatown. The NAACP estimated that seventy percent of the gas stations and one-third of the small grocery markets and liquor stores in South Los Angeles were owned by Koreans (Cheng and Espiritu 1989). Despite this growing influence, however, not many Koreans actually moved to South Los Angeles (Map 35).

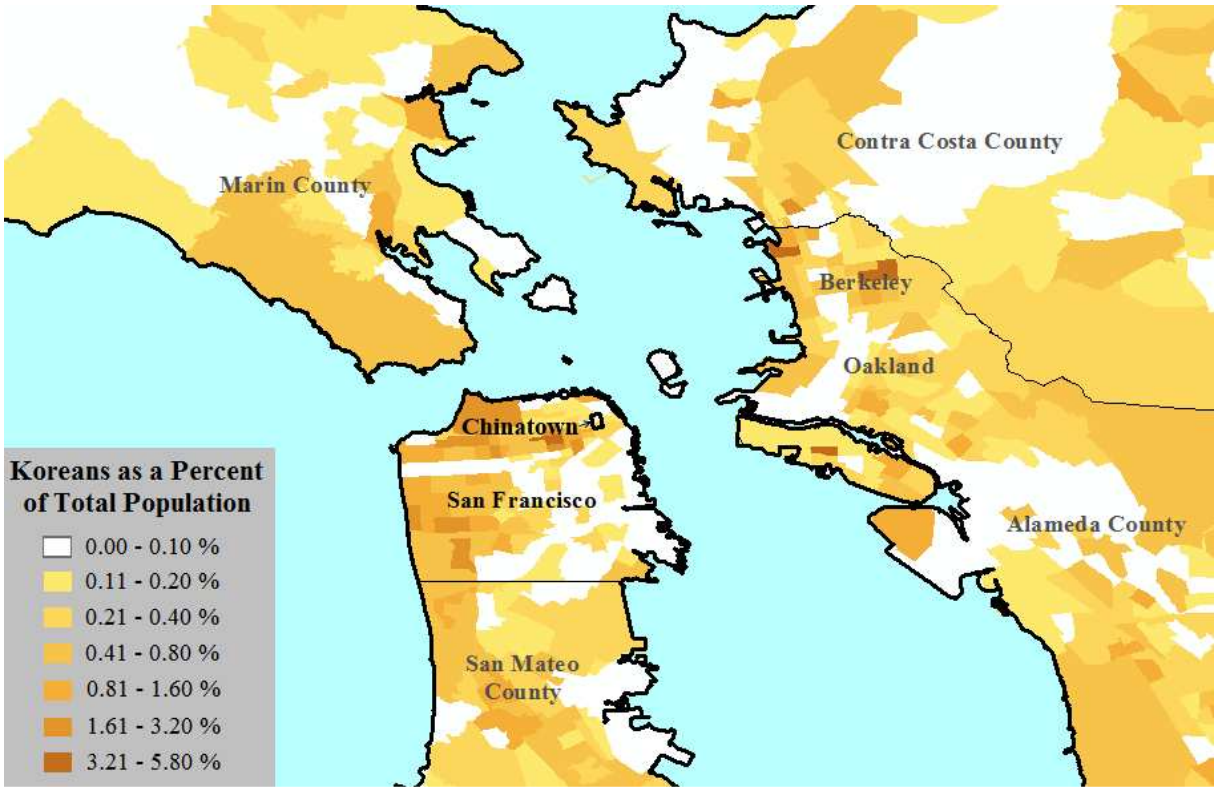
Although some Koreans had lived in South Los Angeles in the 1960s, that area soon became almost exclusively African American. It was and is a poor neighborhood, and the Korean monopolization of local business became a source of tension. For example, in 1986, about forty percent of African-American youths who lived in South Los Angeles were unemployed. For people in this situation, seeing Koreans not only making money from their trade, but also taking these profits to homes elsewhere made them angry. One African-American newspaper writer even went so far as to condemn the whole ethnic group: "I've never in all the

days of my life seen any race of people so full of contempt and arrogance than the heartless, mindless, and thoughtless Koreans" (*The Money Talks News* 1984). A lack of social interaction between the two groups fueled this tension. The Koreans hesitated to befriend the local African Americans because of their uncertainties about the inner workings of American culture and the generally negative stereotypes of these people in the mass culture of the 1950s and 1960s. Traditional Korean society also displays a common cultural antipathy toward people with dark skin color.

While discord between Koreans and African Americans seems understandable, this relationship stood in sharp contrast to a more open exchange between Korean and local Hispanic residents. The Hispanic population in this section of Los Angeles, though only about half the size of the local African-American group, was still large. Their economic situation was not much better than that of the African Americans either, but their relationship with the Koreans was peaceful. Korean store owners often hired Hispanic workers, and many Hispanics owned stores there themselves and competed with the Korean businesses. A survey of articles in the *Los Angeles Times*, local Hispanic newspapers, and *The Korea Times* between 1972 and 1987 did not reveal any confrontations between the two groups (Cheng and Espiritu 1989).

San Francisco Bay Area

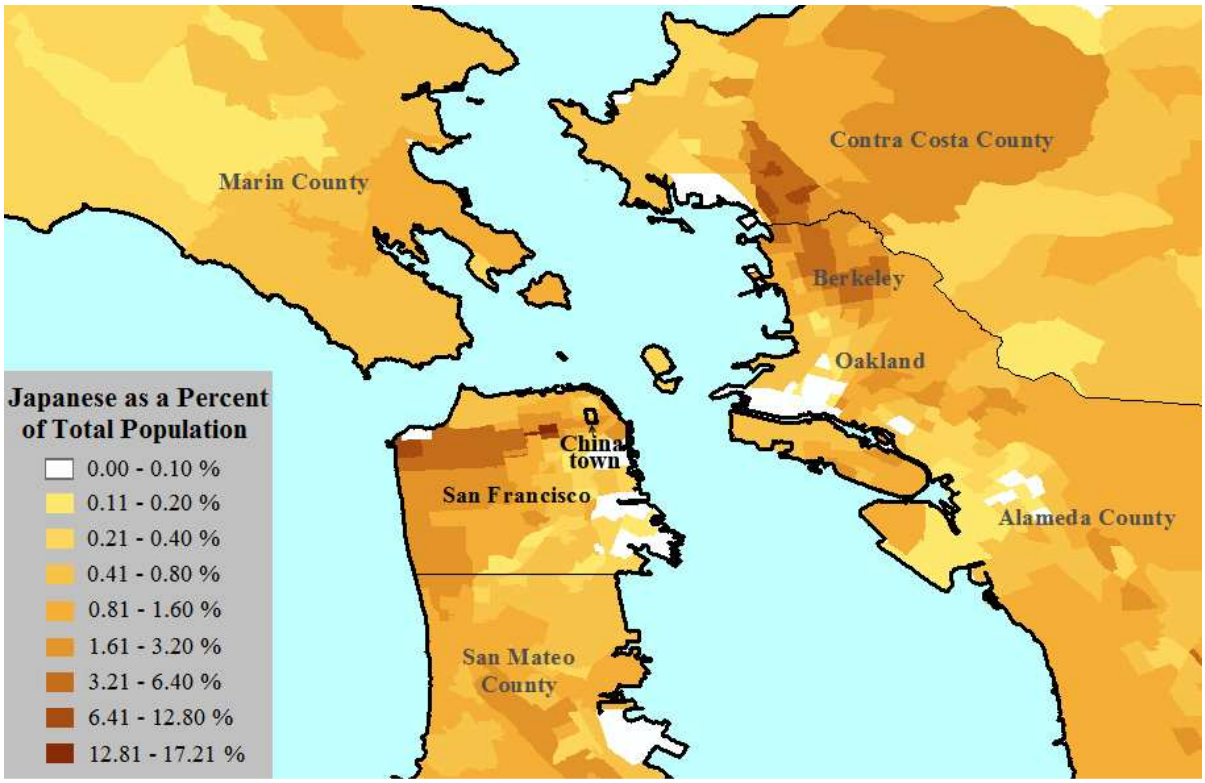
The Korean population in the San Francisco Bay area grew in the 1970s, but at a pace much slower than in Los Angeles. Its distribution was interesting. Koreans there gradually moved away from the traditional Asian core community in Chinatown and settled in the western half of the city as well as on the other side of the bay (Map 36). This pattern was similar to that



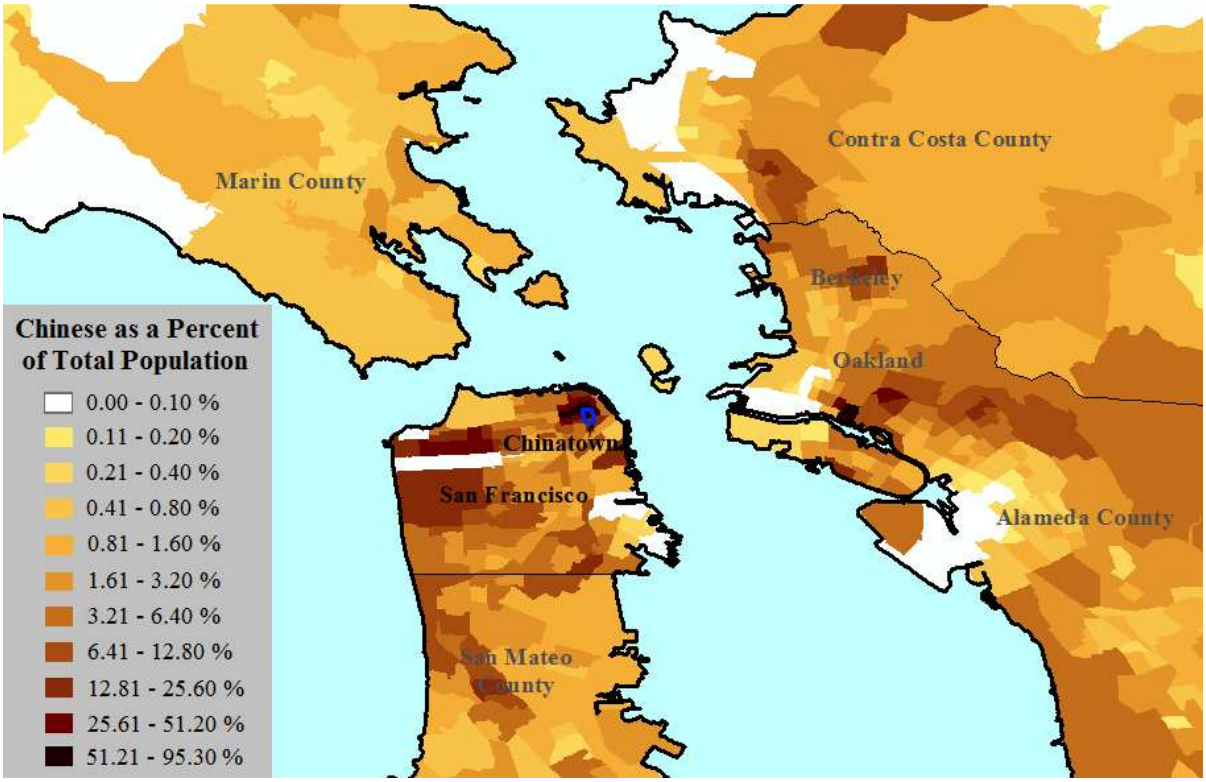
Map 36. Percentage of Population Korean in San Francisco Bay Area by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.

shown by the Japanese (Map 37). Chinese residents, in contrast, maintained their strength in Chinatown while at the same time dispersing somewhat to other areas (Map 38).

Although the size of Korean community in San Francisco was smaller than that in Los Angeles, the local society was nevertheless solidly established because of its relatively long history. New immigrants here could find support from kinsmen and various social organizations. Whereas the Korean United Methodist Church on Powell Street had been the only Korean ethnic church of the city prior to 1966, twelve were in operation by 1976. This rapid expansion of churches was partly a product of population growth, but also because of the variety in religious preferences among the new immigrants and internal disputes within individual congregations. Whatever the reason for establishment, these new churches were dispersed throughout the urban area and therefore easily available to new immigrants (Choy 1979, 264-265).



Map 37. Percentage of Population Japanese in San Francisco Bay Area by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.



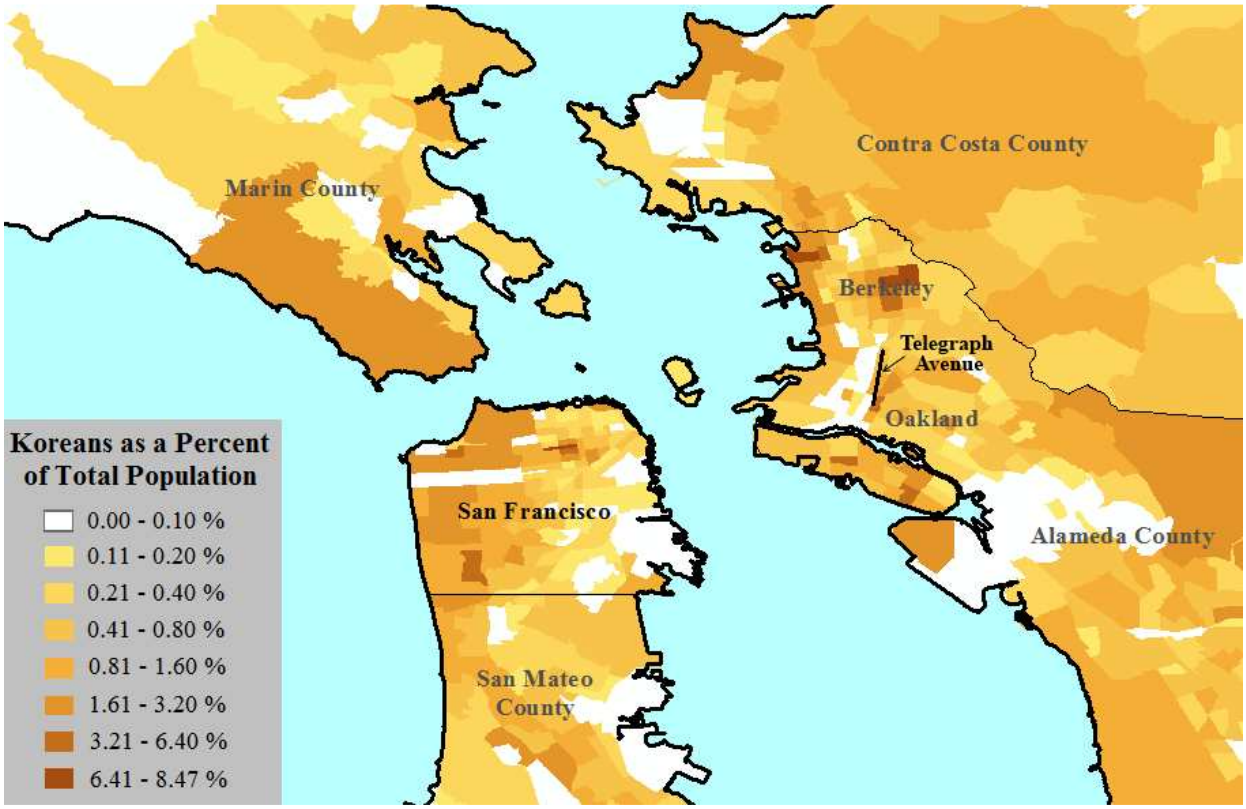
Map 38. Percentage of Population Chinese in San Francisco Bay Area by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.

In addition to informal contacts, Koreans in San Francisco could reach out to several formal organizations as well. First, the Multi-Service Center for Koreans (MSCK) provided language education and job training under a contract with the city. It was funded by the federal Comprehensive Employment Training Act of 1973. Hannah Surh, the organization's founder and first chair, explained that this center was helped initially by the previously established San Francisco Chinese Resources Development Center. The process was tricky. First, she organized the Korean community group to be advisory to the Chinatown board and then obtained a federal grant in 1975 as a unit of the Chinatown program. The MSCK became independent next year (Choy 1979, 316-317). During the 1970s, this center placed a hundred or more Koreans annually in various businesses, including hospitals and banks. The average salary obtained in 1975 was about six thousand dollars, a little lower than the national average of seventy-five hundred. Still, some of the people placed earned as much as ten thousand dollars annually (Choy 1979, 226-227).

Korean-American pupils in San Francisco (like those in Los Angeles) benefited from California's Bilingual Education Act of 1972. Although schools in the other part of the U. S. were providing a general program in English as a second language, only ones in California provided Korean-English bilingual education at this time (Choy 1979, 246-247). With a relative abundance of helping hands from local organizations, the Korean-American community in the San Francisco Bay Area remained one of the influential in the country.

The sharpest contrast between the Koreans of Northern and Southern California lay in the realm of occupation. Most of the people in San Francisco were not interested in starting small businesses in the 1970s and early part of the 1980s. This was because of the city's particular economy, which was based narrowly on corporate activity, finance, and tourism services plus the

high-technology electronics complex nearby in the Santa Clara valley (Razin 1988). Inexpensive residential neighborhoods with demands for small grocers and gasoline stations were rare. This situation worsened in the mid 1980s as the booming computer industry in the area raised real-estate prices even higher. As a result, many Koreans in San Francisco moved out of the city. The east side of the bay was one popular destination, especially Berkeley and along Telegraph Avenue in Oakland between 23rd and 51st streets. That part of Oakland was mostly African American at the time and characterized by urban decay (Map 39). Koreans saw the area primarily in terms of land prices. Here was a neighborhood where their investment dollars could purchase a lot. Many of them began to open grocery stores and gasoline stations just like their kinsmen in Los Angeles had done. Some became wealthy (*San Francisco Chronicle*, June 13, 2002).



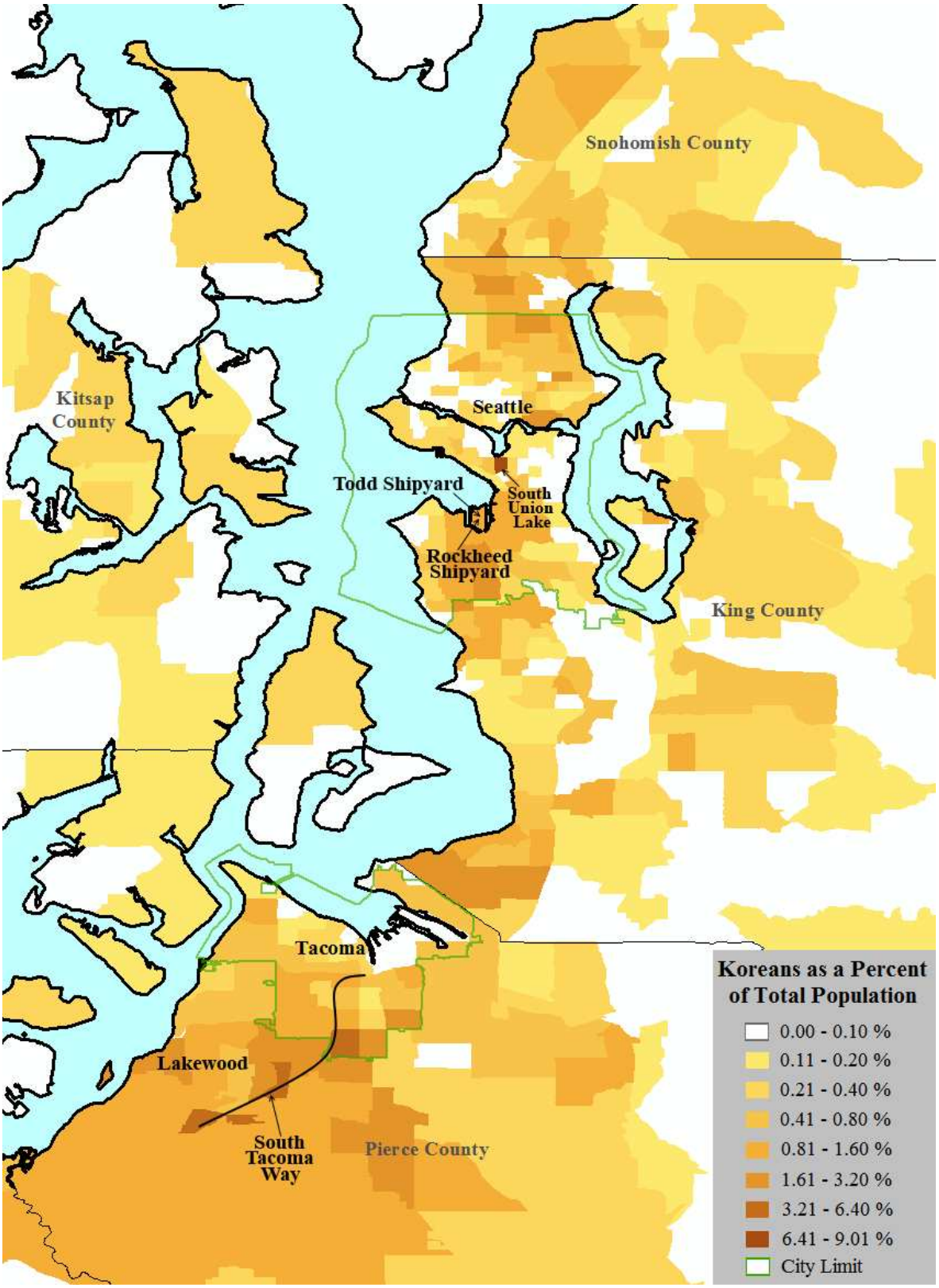
Map 39. Percentage of Population Korean in San Francisco Bay Area by Census Tract, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.

Unlike in Koreatown in Los Angeles, the Korean population in Oakland was not large, so the new businessmen had to target the local African-American consumers exclusively. One might think that these entrepreneurs, like their local Japanese and Thai counterparts, would write their store names only in English. This was not the case. Most Korean stores instead displayed shop signs in English and Korean together, and with the Korean letters as large as the English ones. The owner of Boa Gifts, a shop on Telegraph Avenue, explained that she kept the Korean script to help the Koreans who still were not good in English identify the shop and to create a sense of identity with them (Malinowski 2009, 114).

In 1980s, the annual income of self-employed Koreans in the San Francisco Bay Area averaged some twenty thousand dollars, the second highest among ethnic groups in the area (behind only the Iranians). This sum was much higher than that earned by Koreans who worked for other people. Their average salary was about twelve thousand dollars annually (Razin 1988). As time went on, the social relationship between local African Americans and Koreas in Oakland became similar with the one in Los Angeles. Tensions grew and people worried that riots might occur (*San Francisco Chronicle* 2002).

Seattle-Tacoma

The population patterns of Koreans in the urban areas of Washington State were similar to those in California. In the 1970s, most Koreans clustered in the South Union Lake neighborhood in the central part of Seattle (Map 40). Again, this pattern differed from that of other Asians in the city. The Chinese, for example, occupied a multiethnic neighborhood presently called the "International District," where they had been living with other Asian groups since the late



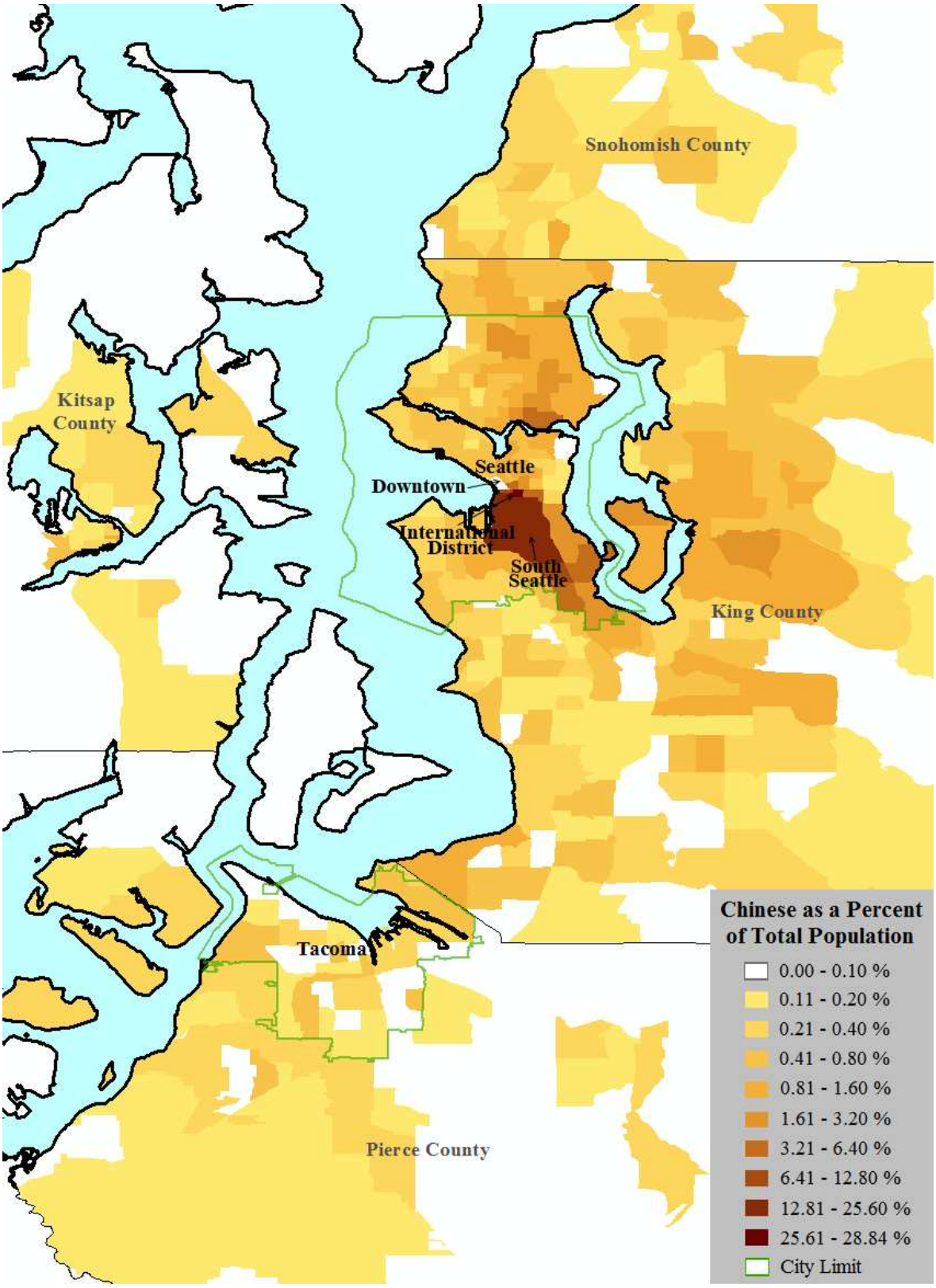
Map 40. Percentage of Population Korean in Seattle and Tacoma Metropolitan Regions by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.

nineteenth century (Maps 41 and 42) (Jun 2011, 63). The Japanese pattern was similar.

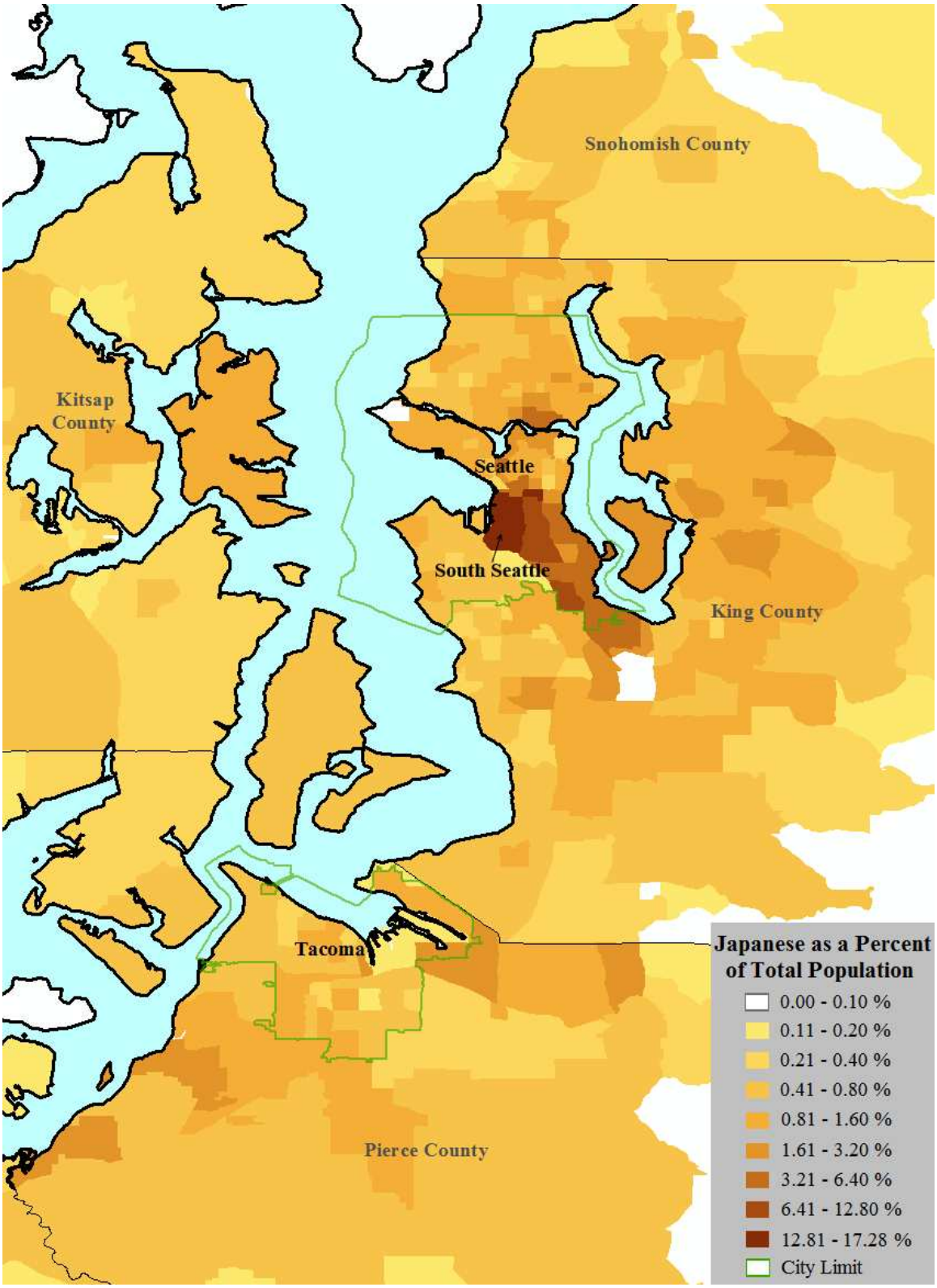
Staring at least in 1983, Korean immigrants in Washington State could receive systematic support similar to that I described for San Francisco. The Korean Community Service Center (KSCS), for example, opened in Edmonds, Snohomish County that year. Initially, it provided only basic interpreting service. It then added information and assistance services, including individual and family counseling to overcome various cultural issues (*Korean Community Service Center* 2014).

Up through the mid-1970s, most Koreans in the Seattle-Tacoma area worked as laborers, many for local lumber companies (*The Koalife*, September 2012). Then, starting in 1975, another large group found jobs as welders and pipefitters with the Todd and Lockheed shipyards in West Seattle (Map 40). It was estimated that one out of six workers at these shipyards were Korean (*Korean-American Historical Society* 2003).

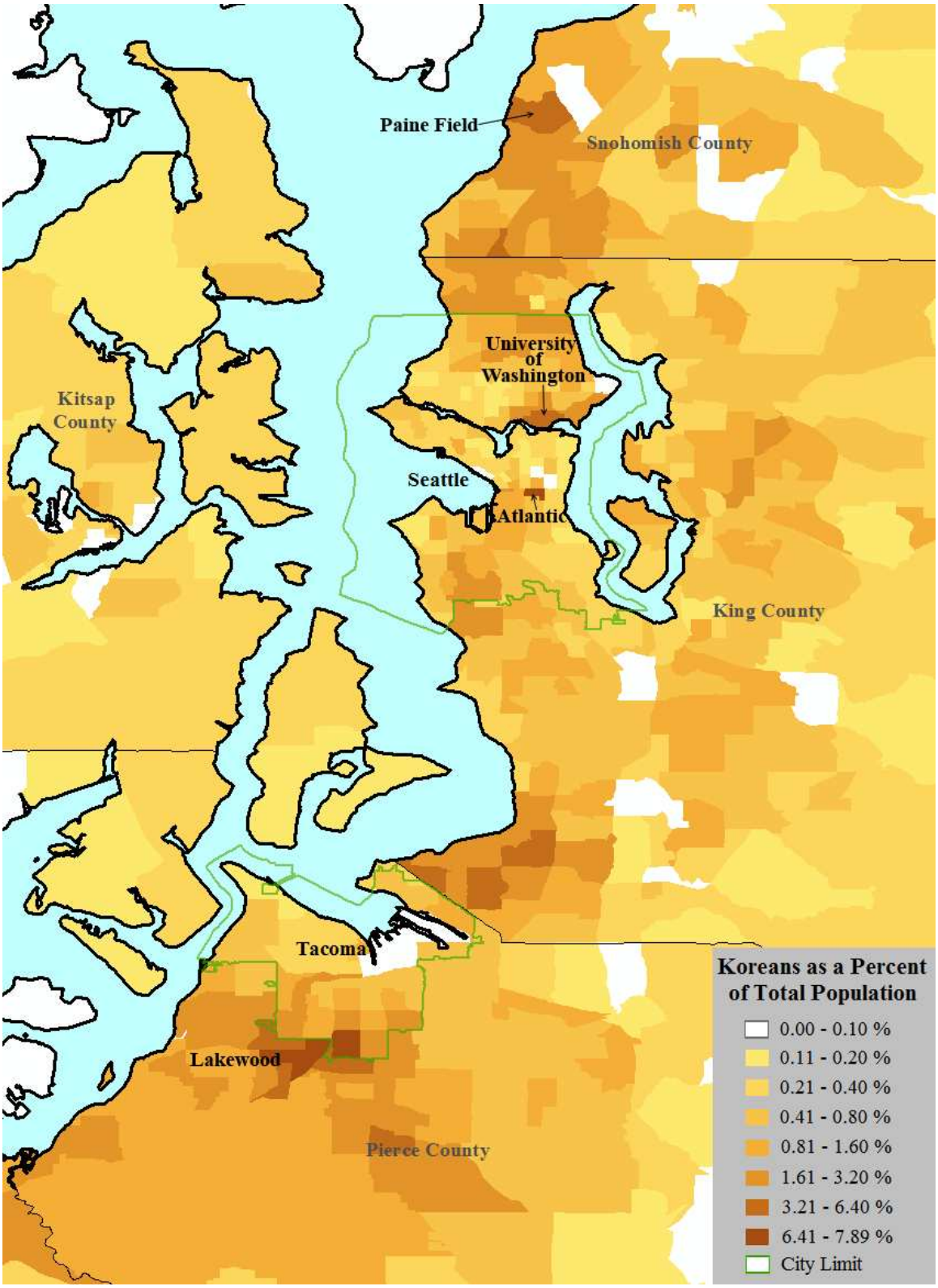
As the Seattle's Korean workers earned and saved money, many followed the path set by their California kinsmen and started small businesses. Boo Han, a Lakewood resident, probably initiated the trend. When he immigrated to the U. S. in 1973, he produced tofu in his home garage and sold it to other Asians. A few years later, when he had more money, he expanded this business by starting a grocery store along South Tacoma Way (Map 40) (*Boo Han Market* 2014). After Han established his business, the Korean population in the region began to concentrate around his store (Map 43). His business became quite successful, and encouraged many other immigrants to follow in his footsteps (*The Koalife* 2012).



Map 41. Percentage of Population Chinese in Seattle and Tacoma Metropolitan Regions by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.



Map 42. Percentage of Population Japanese in Seattle and Tacoma Metropolitan Regions by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.

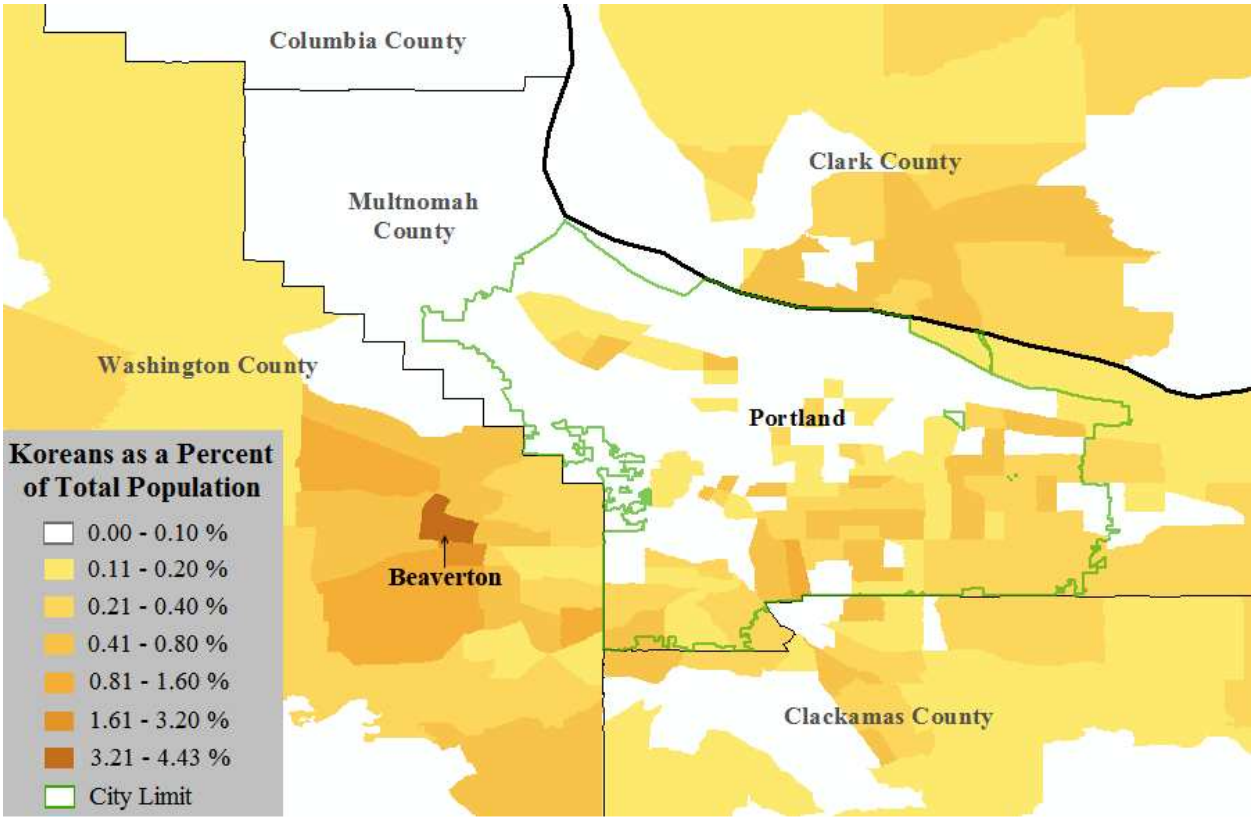


Map 43. Percentage of Population Korean in Seattle and Tacoma Metropolitan Regions by Census Tract, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.

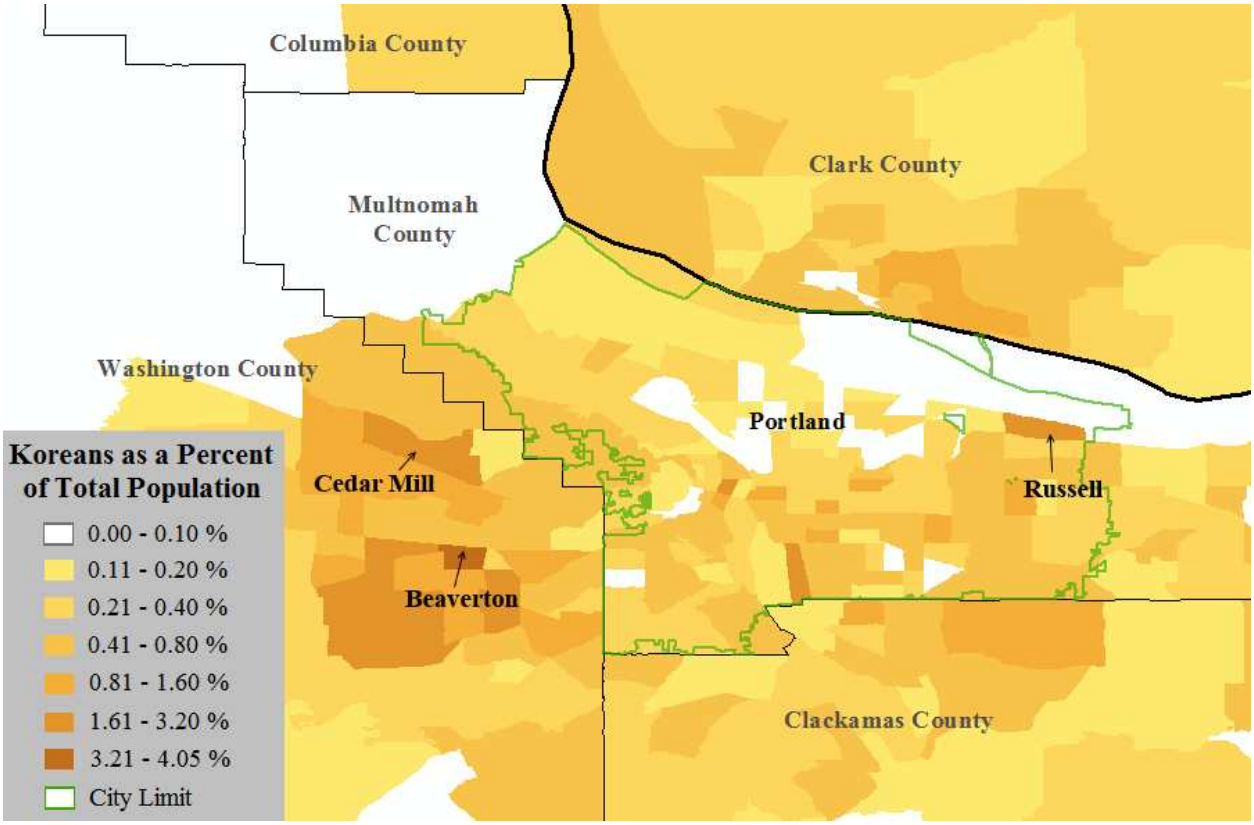
Portland

Koreans began to move into Portland in the early 1970s, and soon became that city's second-fastest-growing ethnicity behind only Mexicans. Their growth pattern was similar to that in other western cities, but with a twist. In Portland, the Korean community core was located in Beaverton, a suburban town, rather than an inner-city neighborhood (Maps 44 and 45). One reason was timing. Because the Korean community in Portland began only in the 1970s, after racial segregation was abolished, it was not forced to locate in the inner city. Why the particular choice of Beaverton remains a mystery, however.

Despite their suburban location, the Korean lifestyle in Portland was similar to that in other West Coast cities. In fact, many of the Koreans in this metropolitan region migrated from



Map 44. Percentage of Population Korean in Portland by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.



Map 45. Percentage of Population Korean in Portland by Census Tract, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.

Californian cities. The Portland people tended to operate small businesses rather than working as employees, and when they selected a business type, they gravitated toward those where they could use information gleaned from ethnic networks. The number of Korean-owned businesses in Oregon doubled between 1980 and 1990, and the group owned two-thirds of Portland's dry-cleaning shops and a half of its small grocery stores. In addition, they owned several larger businesses, including Camera World, one of the nation's largest mail-order camera and electronic firms. Some Korean-owned businesses even migrated to Portland from South Korea and the Californian cities (Harvey 1996).

Strip malls were the most common locations for the Korean businesses in Portland, and several such malls were a hundred percent Korean-owned. The Hyundai Plaza in Beaverton was

one example, featuring a gift shop, bookstore, video rentals, and several other small stores. No other ethnic group in the city was nearly as active on the business scene (Harvey 1996).

Chapter 8

Sa-I-Gu and Recent Developments in the West Coast Communities, 1992-2010

"Sa-I-Gu" (four-two-nine), which means April 29 in Korean language, is how Korean Americans refer the Los Angeles Riots of 1992, also known as the Rodney King Riots. This name refers to the day the fighting broke out, of course, and is the general way Koreans refer to significant historical events, especially those with negative components. The most famous example is "Yook-I-Oh" (six-two-five), a name for the Korean War that began June 25, 1950. "Sa-I-Gu" is important, too, the only historical event that happened in America that is referenced in this hallowed way. Whereas many Americans have largely forgotten this particular tragedy in the whirl of more recent conflicts, Korean Americans see it as singular. For them, 1992 marks a change in attitude, a shaking of their optimism for their new country. It was heartbreaking and devastating like a war. During the 1992 riot, 2,280 Korean businesses throughout Los Angeles were destroyed. Of the four hundred million dollar economic loss that Los Angeles suffered, about forty percent came from Korean-owned businesses (Chang 2002).

The riots affected nearly every Korean in Los Angeles either directly or indirectly. Many of the victims took years to recover from the economic damage they received. Some never did, and suffered mental problems. Other people got angry and thought about taking revenge on the rioters, while still others protested to the city government for its inability to protect private property. Although the riots obviously were localized, their impact was not. Attitudes, thoughts, and lifestyles of Korean Americans throughout the country all changed after Sa-I-Gu (Chang 2002).

Many of the changes were geographic, beginning with a decline in the popularity of the two big California cities among Korean Americans. The percentage of Koreans in the U. S. who lived in Los Angeles, which had increased continuously from 1970 to 1990, declined for the next two decades (compare Table 23 to Table 16). The San Francisco Bay area, which experienced similar racial tension, also showed decline for a decade. In contrast to these places, the cities in the Pacific Northwest region gained Korean population. Unlike Los Angeles, they suffered no critical violence and so became the popular entry points for new immigrants across the Pacific Ocean. In addition, they became major relocation sites for victimized Los Angeles Koreans who wanted to leave their troubles behind. San Diego and nearby Orange County also saw large increases in their Korean populations during this same period. Part of the reason was a continuation of the suburbanization process, but part was also riot-related (Min 1996, 71).

Occupation preferences among Koreans also changed significantly after the 1992 riot. Because small grocers and store owners had been the main targets for rioters, the percentages of people employed in these businesses declined nationwide and especially on the West Coast (Tables 24 and 25). In case of the two big California cities, even the raw numbers of Korean employees in the industry declined.

Southern California

On March 3, 1991, Rodney King, a twenty-five year old African American was shot and brutally beaten by four police officers along a highway in the San Fernando Valley (*The Los Angeles Times*, May 11, 1992). The evidence was clear, but on April 29, 1992, a jury consisting of ten whites, one Hispanic, and one Asian told the world that the officers were innocent (*The*

Group	City	Korean Population			Korean Pop. Growth		Percent of U. S. Total Korean			% of Korean Pop. Growth	
		1990	2000	2010	1990-2000	2000-2010	1990	2000	2010	1990-2000	2000-2010
West Coast	Los Angeles	181,350	241,923	324,586	60,573	82,663	22.7%	19.7%	19.0%	33.4%	34.2%
	Portland	5,871	8,702	14,209	2,831	5,507	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%	48.2%	63.3%
	San Diego	6,722	12,004	25,387	5,282	13,383	0.9%	1.0%	1.5%	78.6%	111.5%
	San Francisco-Oakland	23,894	32,672	50,867	8,778	18,195	3.0%	2.6%	3.0%	36.7%	55.7%
	Seattle-Tacoma	23,901	38,209	64,771	14,308	26,562	3.0%	3.1%	3.8%	59.9%	69.5%
	Total	**241,738**	**333,510**	**479,820**	**91,772**	**146,310**	**30.3%**	**27.1%**	**28.1%**	**38.0%**	**43.9%**
Interior West	Denver	6,960	10,197	15,400	3,237	5,203	0.9%	0.8%	0.9%	46.5%	51.0%
	Las Vegas	3,376	6,355	16,261	2,979	9,906	0.4%	0.5%	1.0%	88.2%	155.9%
	Salt Lake City	1,841	2,374	5,093	533	2,719	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	29.0%	114.5%
	San Antonio	2,442	2,976	6,655	534	3,679	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%	21.9%	123.6%
	Phoenix	3,501	5,878	14,449	2,377	8,571	0.5%	0.5%	0.8%	67.9%	145.8%
	Total	**18,120**	**27,780**	**57,858**	**9,660**	**30,078**	**2.3%**	**2.3%**	**3.4%**	**53.3%**	**108.3%**
Mid west	Chicago	36,189	45,080	59,171	8,891	14,091	4.5%	3.7%	3.5%	24.6%	31.3%
	Cleveland	2,053	2,446	3,464	393	1,018	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	19.1%	41.6%
	Detroit	6,571	8,347	11,930	1,776	3,583	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	27.0%	42.9%
	Kansas City	2,426	3,066	5,685	640	2,619	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	26.4%	85.4%
	Milwaukee	1,718	2,071	3,338	353	1,267	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	20.5%	61.2%
	Minneapolis-St. Paul	8,117	9,208	14,679	1,091	5,471	1.0%	0.7%	0.9%	13.4%	59.4%
	St. Louis	3,080	3,848	6,076	768	2,228	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	24.9%	57.9%
	Total	**60,154**	**74,066**	**104,343**	**13,912**	**30,277**	**7.5%**	**6.0%**	**6.1%**	**23.1%**	**40.9%**
North east	Baltimore	12,940	17,934	28,348	4,994	10,414	1.6%	1.5%	1.7%	38.6%	58.1%
	Boston	8,504	13,895	23,115	5,391	9,220	1.1%	1.1%	1.4%	63.4%	66.4%
	New York	90,705	129,017	169,808	38,312	40,791	11.3%	10.5%	9.9%	42.2%	31.6%
	Philadelphia	22,028	26,725	37,616	4,697	10,891	2.8%	2.2%	2.2%	21.3%	40.8%
	Washington, D.C.	39,007	54,478	85,669	15,471	31,191	4.9%	4.4%	5.0%	39.7%	57.3%
	Total	**173,184**	**242,049**	**344,556**	**68,865**	**102,507**	**21.7%**	**19.7%**	**20.2%**	**39.8%**	**42.3%**
South	Atlanta	9,471	20,540	42,592	11,069	22,052	1.2%	1.7%	2.5%	116.9%	107.4%
	Dallas	8,963	14,739	26,538	5,776	11,799	1.1%	1.2%	1.6%	64.4%	80.1%
	Houston	7,200	10,071	17,484	2,871	7,413	0.9%	0.8%	1.0%	39.9%	73.6%
	Memphis	994	1,541	2,404	547	863	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	55.0%	56.0%
	Miami	1,403	1,333	2,059	-70	726	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	-5.0%	54.5%
	New Orleans	841	1,169	1,506	328	337	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	39.0%	28.8%
	Total	**28,872**	**49,393**	**92,583**	**20,521**	**43,190**	**3.6%**	**4.0%**	**5.4%**	**71.1%**	**87.4%**
Small Cities and Towns		**276,781**	**501,629**	**627,662**	**224,848**	**126,033**	**34.6%**	**40.9%**	**36.8%**	**81.2%**	**25.1%**
Total United States		**798,849**	**1,228,427**	**1,706,822**	**429,578**	**478,395**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**53.8%**	**38.9%**

Table 23. Korean Population Distribution in Major U. S. Cities, 1990, 2000, and 2010 and their Growth Rates. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7, 2000_SF1a, NPCT005B, and 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

	Place	Agriculture	Construction	Finance	Manufacturing	Retail	Service	Transportation	Wholesale	Others	Total
Population	Los Angeles -San Diego	679	4,667	7,045	13,991	25,725	25,034	3,425	5,415	965	86,946
	Portland	14	22	106	457	891	798	141	154	17	2,600
	San Francisco -Oakland	67	455	844	1,447	3,596	4,146	578	349	296	11,778
	Seattle-Tacoma	130	181	454	2,042	3,224	3,363	480	460	259	10,593
	United States	2,611	11,068	18,792	52,281	63,222	117,161	13,492	15,573	6,698	300,898
Percentage	Los Angeles -San Diego	0.78%	5.37%	8.10%	16.09%	29.59%	28.79%	3.94%	6.23%	1.11%	100.00%
	Portland	0.54%	0.85%	4.08%	17.58%	34.27%	30.69%	5.42%	5.92%	0.65%	100.00%
	San Francisco -Oakland	0.57%	3.86%	7.17%	12.29%	30.53%	35.20%	4.91%	2.96%	2.51%	100.00%
	Seattle-Tacoma	1.23%	1.71%	4.29%	19.28%	30.43%	31.75%	4.53%	4.34%	2.44%	100.00%
	United States	0.87%	3.68%	6.25%	17.37%	21.01%	38.94%	4.48%	5.18%	2.22%	**100.00%**

Table 24. Numbers of Koreans Employed by Industry Type in West Coast Cities, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF4b, NPB61.

	Place	Agriculture	Construction	Finance	Manufacturing	Retail	Service	Transportation	Wholesale	Others	Total
Population	Los Angeles -San Diego	111	4,480	8,684	15,913	17,896	47,506	3,961	8,487	6,090	113,128
	Portland	12	131	234	517	853	2,127	117	178	194	4,363
	San Francisco -Oakland	19	606	1,242	1,928	2,345	8,550	786	459	1,201	17,136
	Seattle-Tacoma	49	506	1,201	2,112	3,356	9,385	996	682	1,219	19,506
	United States	1,657	15,138	32,370	59,632	89,091	258,949	17,692	22,242	29,990	526,761
Percentage	Los Angeles -San Diego	0.10%	3.96%	7.68%	14.07%	15.82%	41.99%	3.50%	7.50%	5.38%	100.00%
	Portland	0.28%	3.00%	5.36%	11.85%	19.55%	48.75%	2.68%	4.08%	4.45%	100.00%
	San Francisco -Oakland	0.11%	3.54%	7.25%	11.25%	13.68%	49.89%	4.59%	2.68%	7.01%	100.00%
	Seattle-Tacoma	0.25%	2.59%	6.16%	10.83%	17.20%	48.11%	5.11%	3.50%	6.25%	100.00%
	United States	0.31%	2.87%	6.15%	11.32%	16.91%	49.16%	3.36%	4.22%	5.70%	**100.00%**

Table 25. Numbers of Koreans Employed by Industry Type in West Coast Cities, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF4, NPCT085C.

New York Times, April 30, 1992). The verdict in this closely watched trial infuriated Los Angeles's African-American community and their anger quickly expanded from this single incident to the general social conditions of their South Los Angeles neighborhood. They felt, in part, that they had been exploited economically. Whites were seen as partly responsible, of course, but the most immediate and visible targets were the numerous Korean store owners who they perceived to act like an ethnic bourgeoisie or a middleman minority (E. Chang 1993).

Bad feelings of the African-American community toward Koreans had been growing for several years. Los Angeles rap musician Ice Cube, for example, had released a song called "Black Korea" in late 1991 with himself performing as a customer wronged in a Korean-owned grocery. The lyrics first threatened a nationwide boycott against Korean-owned stores, but later warned that "we'll burn your store right down to a crisp." Since Ice Cube was one of the most popular West Coast hip hop stars, his song influenced the thoughts of many young people With his phrase "you can't turn the ghetto into Black Korea" echoing through the air, three Korean stores in Los Angeles were firebombed that August, and many other businesses received threats (J. Chang 1993).

As soon as the Rodney King verdict was announced on April 29, 1992, the local Korean community knew that violence might easily occur in South Los Angeles. Around 4:00 p.m., one hour after he heard the news, Edward T. Chang, a professor of ethnic studies at the University of California at Riverside, called (Los Angeles) Radio Korea to warn listeners about the crisis, but neither he nor anybody else suspected that violence might spread into Koreatown itself. Chang himself ate dinner there that evening with local Jewish leaders. Only after 8:30 p.m., did a call from his wife alert him that buildings on the south side of Koreatown were burning along with others in downtown Los Angeles and along the nearby Hollywood Freeway. He monitored the

news every night until the violence ended about one week later and saw rioters throwing torch after torch and buildings burning one after another (E. Chang 2012).

Korean small businesses in every part of the city were targets for rioters. Most of the gasoline stations and liquor stores in South Los Angeles were destroyed (Photo 18), as well as numerous buildings in Koreatown (Photos 19, 20, and 21), and other ethnic stores scattered throughout the metropolis (Photo 22).

Although the racial riot lasted less than a week, the Korean victims, especially ones who had started their businesses only a little before the trouble, needed a long time to recover. Young Soon Han was one of them. In early 1991 she had been working as a nurse. But then her

Photo 18. A Fire-Gutted Liquor Store in South Los Angeles, May 1, 1992. Source: Los Angeles Public Library, LAPL00043445 (used with permission).

Photo 19. A Police Blockade on Vermont Avenue, North of San Marino Street in Koreatown, so that Firemen Could Work on Buildings Torched by Rioters, April 30, 1992. Source: Los Angeles Public Library, LAPL00045175 (used with permission).

Photo 20. A Korean Store Burning on a Street near the Intersection of South Western Avenue, April 30, 1992. Source: Los Angeles Public Library, LAPL00043464 (used with permission).

Photo 21. The Remnants of a Camera Store located on Beverly Boulevard, Koreatown, April 30, 1992. Source: Los Angeles Public Library, LAPL00063840 (used with permission).

Photo 22. Fire Fighters Pouring Water on Burning La Mancha Shopping Center in West Los Angeles, a Site of Many Korean Small Businesses, April 30, 1992. Source: Los Angeles Public Library, LAPL00043455 (used with permission).

husband died of cancer, and she had to manage the liquor store he had owned. She had just paid off the bank loan on this store by refinancing her house when the riot occurred. Her store burned down completely on the night of April 29, 1992, leaving her with basically nothing (Kim and Yu 1996, 244-251).

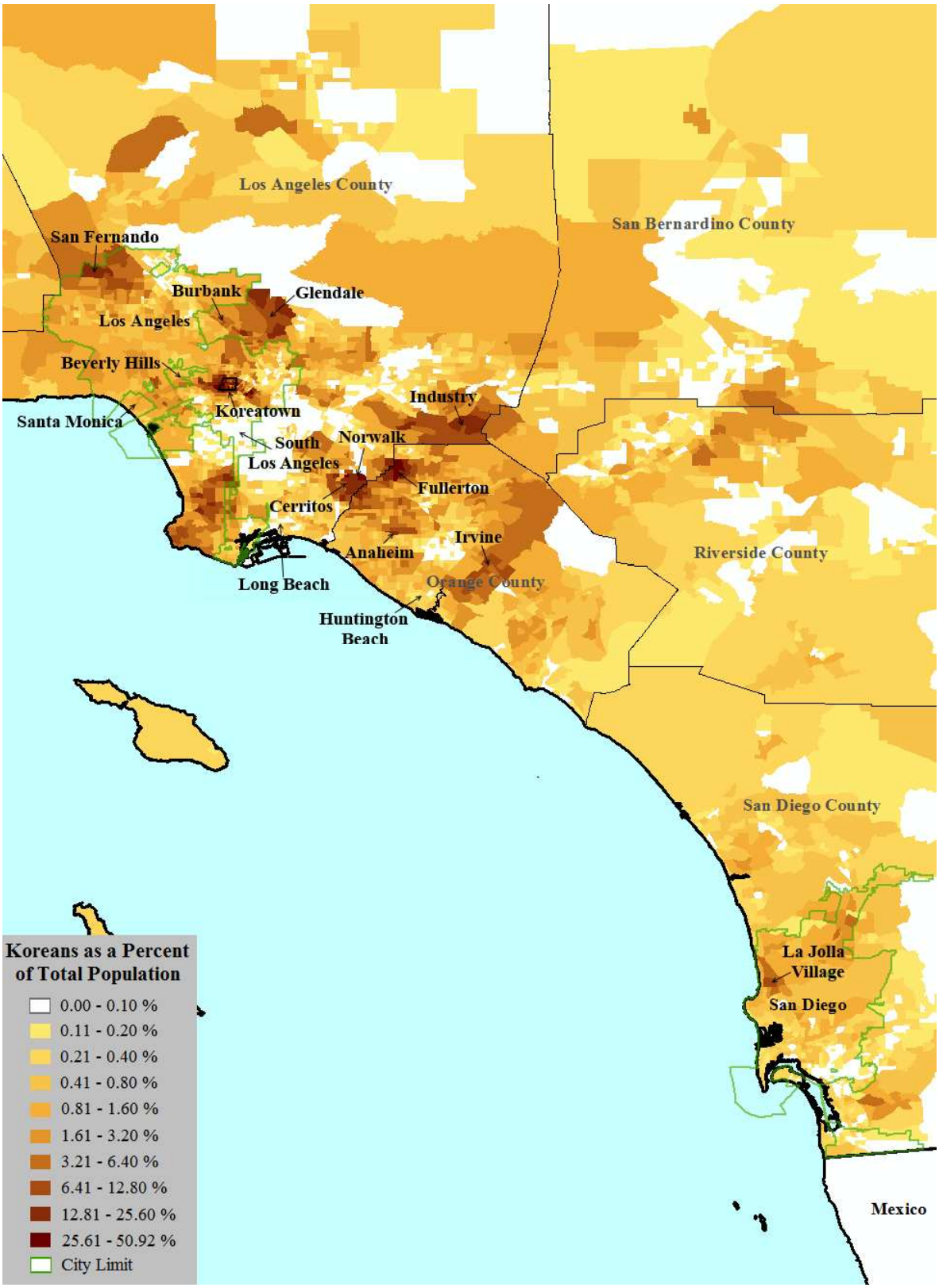
Han was just one of many victims. In fact, only three families among her social group were able to restart their businesses within a year. A general economic recession made matters worse. Han also recalled that none of the Koreans who previously owned liquor stores in South Los Angeles went back to their old locations (Kim and Yu 1996, 244-251). And, according to Kyung-Ja Lee, owners fitted metal fences around most of the rebuilt stores and strip malls in and near Koreatown (Kim and Yu 1996, 170).

The April riot affected more than business practices. For example, the political mindset of Korean Americans in Los Angeles and elsewhere across the U. S. changed dramatically. Prior to the riot, the majority of these people (like most immigrant groups) supported the Democratic Party. Now many of them turned conservative. This can be easily demonstrated by the affiliations of Korean-American politicians in the 1992 election. Jay Kim, the first Korean in the U. S. House of Representatives (1993-1999), was a Republican, and so were the only two Korean state representatives from the other West Coast states, Washington and Oregon. In contrast, the only Korean Democrat of note was a candidate for state representative in Hawaii (Kivisto and Rundblad 2000, 75-76).

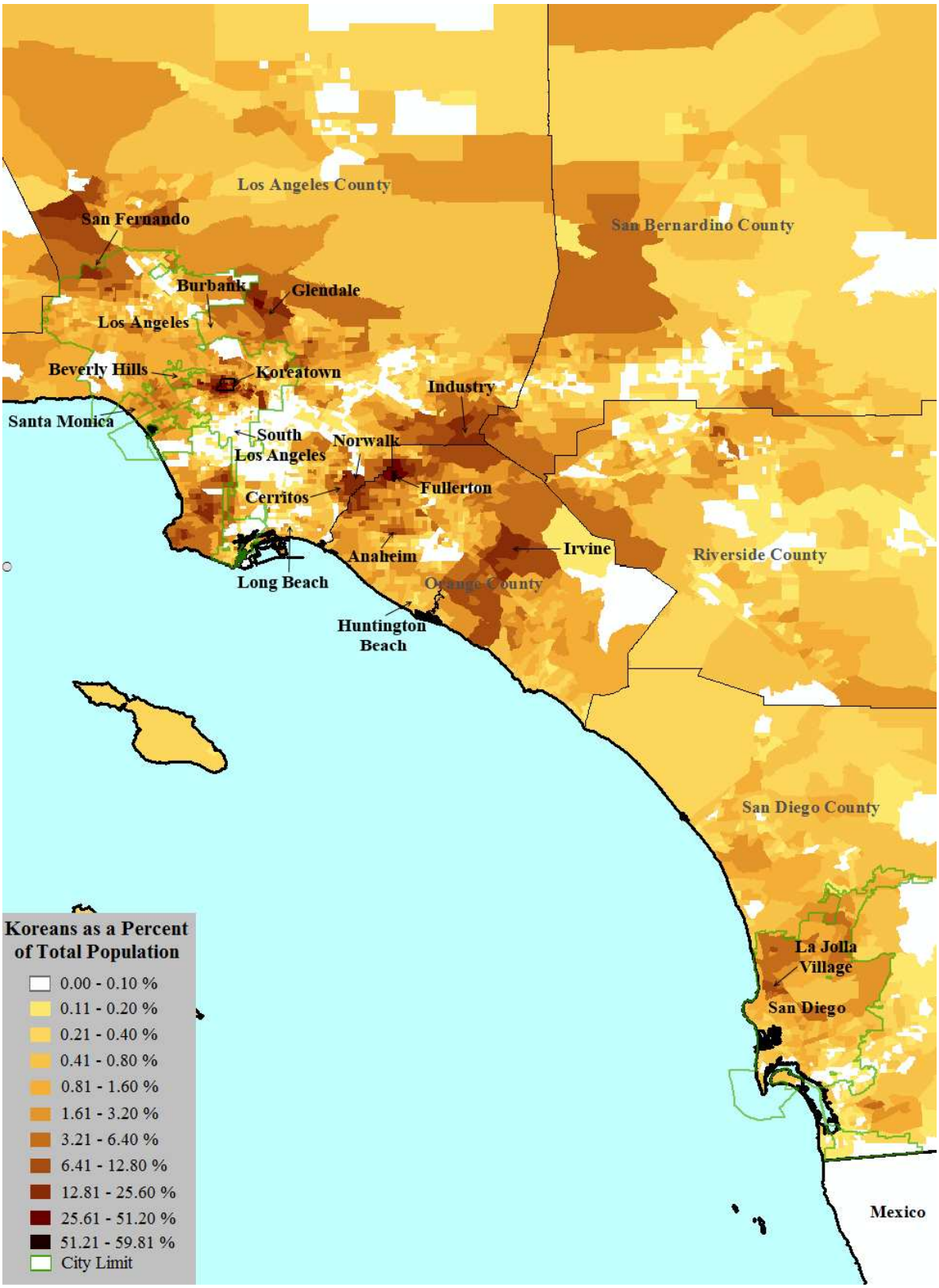
A second change, and one opposite in tone from political conservatism, was an effort by some Koreans to improve their relationships with other local minority groups. A few days after the riot, some forty thousand Koreans gathered at Los Angeles's Ardmore Park for a peace

march. Tension was present, to be sure, including verbal disputes with African Americans and others, but they kept the march peaceful (Kim and Yu 1996, 208-209). In addition, liberal-minded Korean groups began to address even more fundamental issues. The Korean Youth and Community Center (KYCC) sponsored peace talks with African-American community leaders and built person-to-person relationships. The Korean Immigrant Workers Advocates (KIWA) made alliances with several labor unions and even represented a group of Hispanic workers against Korean-American employers and helped them find affordable housing. In addition, the Korean Health, Education, Information, and Research Center (KHEIR) added Spanish-language interpreters to help serve a broader cleintele (Park 2012).

Although Koreatown remained the focus of the Los Angeles Korean population center in 2000 and 2010, the riot definitely served as a catalyst for dispersion. Through this process, places like Cerritos, Fullerton, and Glendale increased their ethnic populations greatly, and Koreans even became the majority group in Fullerton (Maps 46 and 47). With this change in location came new occupations, a move toward service sector and away from retail. This same trend applied to Koreans who remained in Los Angeles, with the number of retail shops operated falling by four thousand between 2000 and 2010 (Tables 26 and 27). In addition, it is interesting to point out a difference in educational attainments that emerged at this time between the Koreans in Los Angeles proper as opposed to their kinsmen in other, more suburban parts, of the Southern California region (Table 28). The average income of the Koreans in the city even dropped below the national average in 2000 (Table 29).



Map 46. Percentage of Population Korean in Southern California by Census Tract, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.



Map 47. Percentage of Population Korean in Southern California by Census Tract, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

	Place	Agriculture	Construction	Finance	Manufacturing	Retail	Service	Transportation	Wholesale	Others	Total
Population	Los Angeles	225	1,841	3,000	5,256	9,934	9,856	1,353	1,974	287	33,726
	Anaheim	33	202	117	403	605	704	53	134	33	2,284
	Beverly Hills	0	0	6	0	54	67	7	20	0	154
	Burbank	26	42	54	205	162	169	29	29	16	732
	Cerritos	6	74	186	373	822	620	113	255	10	2,459
	Fullerton	9	109	260	269	575	565	42	201	13	2,043
	Glendale	20	170	331	571	1,204	1,344	138	293	27	4,098
	Huntington Beach	10	15	75	117	152	188	59	53	27	696
	Irvine	7	95	121	253	480	557	73	118	12	1,716
	Long Beach	0	14	4	75	314	190	72	18	0	687
	Norwalk	0	57	90	235	367	377	94	97	17	1,334
	San Diego	31	89	101	266	511	522	28	35	39	1,622
	Santa Monica	0	16	7	4	123	57	7	32	38	284
	So. California Total	**679**	**4,667**	**7,045**	**13,991**	**25,725**	**25,034**	**3,425**	**5,415**	**965**	**86,946**
	U. S. Total	**2,611**	**11,068**	**18,792**	**52,281**	**63,222**	**117,161**	**13,492**	**15,573**	**6,698**	**300,898**
Percentage	Los Angeles	0.7%	5.5%	8.9%	15.6%	29.5%	29.2%	4.0%	5.8%	0.8%	100.0%
	Anaheim	1.4%	8.8%	5.1%	17.7%	26.5%	30.8%	2.3%	5.9%	1.5%	100.0%
	Beverly Hills	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	0.0%	35.1%	43.5%	4.5%	13.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Burbank	3.6%	5.7%	7.4%	28.0%	22.1%	23.1%	4.0%	4.0%	2.1%	100.0%
	Cerritos	0.2%	3.0%	7.6%	15.2%	33.4%	25.2%	4.6%	10.4%	0.4%	100.0%
	Fullerton	0.4%	5.3%	12.7%	13.2%	28.1%	27.7%	2.1%	9.8%	0.7%	100.0%
	Glendale	0.5%	4.2%	8.1%	13.9%	29.4%	32.8%	3.4%	7.1%	0.6%	100.0%
	Huntington Beach	1.4%	2.2%	10.8%	16.8%	21.8%	27.0%	8.5%	7.6%	3.9%	100.0%
	Irvine	0.4%	5.5%	7.1%	14.7%	28.0%	32.5%	4.2%	6.9%	0.7%	100.0%
	Long Beach	0.0%	2.0%	0.6%	10.9%	45.7%	27.7%	10.5%	2.6%	0.0%	100.0%
	Norwalk	0.0%	4.3%	6.8%	17.6%	27.5%	28.3%	7.0%	7.3%	1.2%	100.0%
	San Diego	1.9%	5.5%	6.2%	16.4%	31.5%	32.2%	1.7%	2.2%	2.4%	100.0%
	Santa Monica	0.0%	5.6%	2.5%	1.4%	43.3%	20.1%	2.4%	11.3%	13.4%	100.0%
	So. California Total	**0.8%**	**5.4%**	**8.1%**	**16.1%**	**29.6%**	**28.8%**	**3.9%**	**6.2%**	**1.1%**	**100.0%**
	U. S. Total	**0.9%**	**3.7%**	**6.2%**	**17.4%**	**21.0%**	**38.9%**	**4.5%**	**5.2%**	**2.2%**	**100.0%**

Table 26. Numbers of Koreans Employed by Industry Type in Selected Southern California Places, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF4b, NPB61.

	Place	Agriculture	Construction	Finance	Manufacturing	Retail	Service	Transportation	Wholesale	Others	Total
Population	Los Angeles	31	1,377	3,202	5,157	5,910	17,812	1,133	2,860	2,515	39,997
	Anaheim	6	205	177	575	475	1,192	107	185	88	3,010
	Beverly Hills	0	0	53	33	25	156	6	29	26	328
	Burbank	0	25	161	127	172	297	0	80	76	938
	Cerritos	12	114	363	553	713	1,210	168	441	115	3,689
	Fullerton	10	186	289	451	583	1,268	207	336	184	3,514
	Glendale	0	177	380	845	930	2,217	166	566	332	5,613
	Huntington Beach	0	20	105	59	134	494	43	55	63	973
	Irvine	6	153	288	453	449	1,558	62	238	207	3,414
	Long Beach	0	13	111	101	79	377	59	18	48	806
	Norwalk	7	19	53	275	217	470	38	130	59	1,268
	San Diego	16	72	252	424	393	1,731	74	88	205	3,255
	Santa Monica	0	7	58	4	53	261	0	0	58	441
	So. California Total	**111**	**4,480**	**8,684**	**15,913**	**17,896**	**47,506**	**3,961**	**8,487**	**6,090**	**113,128**
	U. S. Total	**1,657**	**15,138**	**32,370**	**59,632**	**89,091**	**258,949**	**17,692**	**22,242**	**29,990**	**526,761**
Percentage	Los Angeles	0.1%	3.4%	8.0%	12.9%	14.8%	44.5%	2.8%	7.2%	6.3%	100.0%
	Anaheim	0.2%	6.8%	5.9%	19.1%	15.8%	39.6%	3.6%	6.1%	2.9%	100.0%
	Beverly Hills	0.0%	0.0%	16.2%	10.1%	7.6%	47.6%	1.8%	8.8%	7.9%	100.0%
	Burbank	0.0%	2.7%	17.2%	13.5%	18.3%	31.7%	0.0%	8.5%	8.1%	100.0%
	Cerritos	0.3%	3.1%	9.8%	15.0%	19.3%	32.8%	4.6%	12.0%	3.1%	100.0%
	Fullerton	0.3%	5.3%	8.2%	12.8%	16.6%	36.1%	5.9%	9.6%	5.2%	100.0%
	Glendale	0.0%	3.1%	6.8%	15.0%	16.6%	39.5%	3.0%	10.1%	5.9%	100.0%
	Huntington Beach	0.0%	2.1%	10.8%	6.1%	13.8%	50.8%	4.4%	5.6%	6.4%	100.0%
	Irvine	0.2%	4.5%	8.4%	13.3%	13.2%	45.6%	1.8%	7.0%	6.0%	100.0%
	Long Beach	0.0%	1.6%	13.8%	12.5%	9.8%	46.8%	7.3%	2.2%	6.0%	100.0%
	Norwalk	0.6%	1.5%	4.2%	21.7%	17.1%	37.1%	3.0%	10.2%	4.6%	100.0%
	San Diego	0.5%	2.2%	7.7%	13.0%	12.1%	53.2%	2.3%	2.7%	6.3%	100.0%
	Santa Monica	0.0%	1.6%	13.2%	0.9%	12.0%	59.2%	0.0%	0.0%	13.1%	100.0%
	So. California Total	**0.1%**	**3.9%**	**7.7%**	**14.1%**	**15.8%**	**42.0%**	**3.5%**	**7.5%**	**5.4%**	**100.0%**
	U. S. Total	**0.3%**	**2.9%**	**6.1%**	**11.3%**	**16.9%**	**49.2%**	**3.4%**	**4.2%**	**5.7%**	**100.0%**

Table 27. Numbers of Koreans Employed by Industry Type in Selected Southern California Places, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF4, NPCT085C.

	Place	No School	Middle School	High School	Bachelor's	Master's	Ph.D	Total
Population	Los Angeles	1,517	8,906	30,350	19,352	5,116	2,308	67,549
	Anaheim	63	395	2,258	1,525	288	198	4,727
	Beverly Hills	0	24	220	211	99	45	599
	Burbank	7	78	559	531	115	71	1,361
	Cerritos	90	313	2,284	2,193	383	121	5,384
	Fullerton	68	255	2,280	2,255	538	313	5,709
	Glendale	103	479	3,679	3,250	606	287	8,404
	Huntington Beach	13	94	537	471	74	125	1314
	Irvine	36	128	1,279	2,024	671	295	4,433
	Long Beach	47	237	638	427	66	54	1,469
	Norwalk	26	182	948	533	80	71	1,840
	San Diego	89	298	1,532	1,573	492	523	4,507
	Santa Monica	0	18	222	200	109	54	603
	So. California Total	**3,193**	**17,646**	**77,872**	**58,013**	**14,079**	**7,591**	**178,394**
	U. S. Total	**15,677**	**85,366**	**322,318**	**213,712**	**65,833**	**41,756**	**744,662**
Percentage	Los Angeles	2.3%	13.2%	44.9%	28.6%	7.6%	3.4%	100.0%
	Anaheim	1.3%	8.3%	47.8%	32.3%	6.1%	4.2%	100.0%
	Beverly Hills	0.0%	4.0%	36.7%	35.2%	16.6%	7.5%	100.0%
	Burbank	0.5%	5.6%	41.1%	39.2%	8.4%	5.2%	100.0%
	Cerritos	1.7%	5.8%	42.4%	40.7%	7.1%	2.3%	100.0%
	Fullerton	1.2%	4.5%	39.9%	39.5%	9.4%	5.5%	100.0%
	Glendale	1.2%	5.7%	43.8%	38.7%	7.2%	3.4%	100.0%
	Huntington Beach	1.0%	7.2%	40.9%	35.8%	5.6%	9.5%	100.0%
	Irvine	0.8%	2.9%	28.8%	45.7%	15.1%	6.7%	100.0%
	Long Beach	3.2%	16.1%	43.4%	29.1%	4.5%	3.7%	100.0%
	Norwalk	1.4%	9.9%	51.5%	29.0%	4.3%	3.9%	100.0%
	San Diego	2.0%	6.6%	34.0%	34.9%	10.9%	11.6%	100.0%
	Santa Monica	0.0%	3.0%	36.8%	33.1%	18.1%	9.0%	100.0%
	So. California Total	**1.8%**	**9.9%**	**43.6%**	**32.5%**	**7.9%**	**4.3%**	**100.0%**
	U. S. Total	**2.1%**	**11.5%**	**43.3%**	**28.7%**	**8.8%**	**5.6%**	**100.0%**

Table 28. Educational Attainment of Koreans in Selected Southern California Places, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF4, NPCT064C.

Place	1999
Los Angeles	$16,689
Anaheim	$16,717
Beverly Hills	$39,446
Burbank	$21,398
Cerritos	$17,877
Fullerton	$18,515
Glendale	$17,633
Huntington Beach	$25,870
Irvine	$16,927
Long Beach	$18,331
Norwalk	$14,735
San Diego	$18,406
Santa Monica	$34,205
Southern California	$18,258
United States	$18,027

Table 29. Average Korean Incomes per Capita in Selected Southern California Places, 1999. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF4, NPCT130A.

Living in Los Angeles proper definitely got tougher after the riot. Even the few Korean grocers who did not lose their stores had to live under pressure. Daniel Jung, the son the Los Angeles liquor store owner I mentioned in chapter 7, recalled that local Korean merchants began to own guns after the riot. His father elected not to do so, but he died one day in mid-1990s when an African-American robber shot him in the head. Daniel has asserted that he harbors no anger against African Americans as a group, but most Korean small-business owners, including his mother, came to feel otherwise and perceived danger whenever they were at work. Still, many of them kept operating the stores because they did not have other options (Lee 2008, 119-123).

As the Korean exodus from Los Angeles proper proceeded after 1992, these people and their businesses no longer dominated the core Koreatown district. This officially designated

name no longer matched with the diversity that existed there. In 2000, for example, Hispanics constituted more than a half of its population of 115,070 (Census Bureau 2010). People then began to raise questions regarding the district's name, but the biggest push in this regard came not from Hispanics but from Bangladeshi, a more recent immigrant group that has grown quickly after 2000. Because of low participation rates in the U. S. population censuses by recent immigrant groups, the official numbers for 2010 show only one percent of the area's population is South Asian. However, a year earlier, Abu Zafar, the Bangladeshi Consul General in Los Angeles, argued that his people there probably numbered no fewer than ten to fifteen thousand, at least ten times more than reported in the census (*The Los Angeles Times*, April 1, 2009).

As of 2014, the Koreatown multicultural district in central Los Angeles still bears to its longstanding name, and so outsiders visiting the area cannot miss seeing one of its large welcoming signs at major intersections (Photo 23). The debate on renaming the district is

Photo 23. A Koreatown Sign at the Intersection of West Olympic Boulevard and South Oxford Avenue. Source: Koreatown LA (used with permission).

ongoing, however, and will continue so long as the suburbanization of Koreans does not stop. It is not difficult to imagine a time when the city of Los Angeles will change these signs to read Little Bangladesh.

San Francisco Bay Area

Only eight Korean grocers in the San Francisco Bay area were attacked during the 1992 riot (*The Korea Times*, June 22, 1992). But the riot escalated racial tensions between Korean merchants and African Americans that already existed. The most widely known conflict between the two groups was a million-dollar lawsuit in 1993 filed by an African-American student at University of California at Berkeley against a Korean grocer operating near the campus. According to this student, the Korean sprayed her with the eyeburning chemical Mace after a fight over the correct change after the purchase of a bottle of orange juice. The news spread across the university campus and made many students angry. Members of the African American Theme House, a student group, called for a boycott of the store (*The Korea Times*, March 24, 1993).

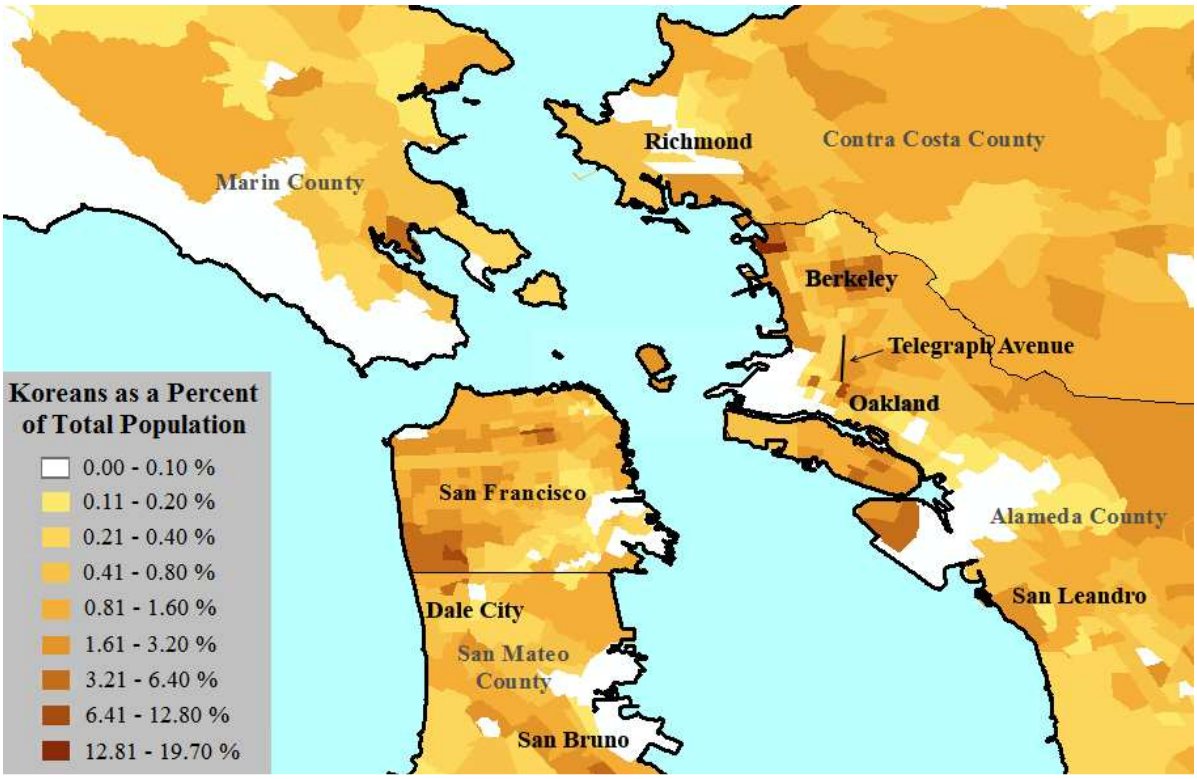
Knowledge of the 1992 riot plus the lawsuit in Berkeley combined to discourage Koreans in the San Francisco Bay area from opening new businesses in low-income areas. In fact, the percentage of Koreans employed in retail trade dropped much quicker here than in Los Angeles and the other western cities (Tables 24 and 25). The most significant declines occurred in the Telegraph Avenue area of Oakland where expansion of such businesses had been greatest in previous decades (Tables 30 and 31). In turn, as the Korean business community declined, the ethnic population also dropped in both 2000 and 2010 (Maps 48 and 49)

	Place	Agriculture	Construction	Finance	Manufacturing	Retail	Service	Transportation	Wholesale	Others	Total
Population	Berkeley	0	19	28	43	71	468	17	11	12	669
	Dale City	0	22	25	6	105	94	40	23	32	347
	Oakland	0	8	68	80	306	348	7	32	16	865
	Richmond	0	8	0	38	84	112	6	8	0	256
	San Bruno	0	0	25	6	82	24	28	20	13	198
	San Francisco	0	179	281	221	1,057	1,186	187	41	66	3,218
	San Leandro	0	0	4	10	52	52	0	0	0	118
	S. F. Bay Area Total	**67**	**455**	**844**	**1,447**	**3,596**	**4,146**	**578**	**349**	**296**	**11,778**
	U. S. Total	**2,611**	**11,068**	**18,792**	**52,281**	**63,222**	**117,161**	**13,492**	**15,573**	**6,698**	**300,898**
Percentage	Berkeley	0.0%	2.8%	4.3%	6.4%	10.6%	70.0%	2.5%	1.6%	1.8%	100.0%
	Dale City	0.0%	6.4%	7.2%	1.7%	30.3%	27.1%	11.5%	6.6%	9.2%	100.0%
	Oakland	0.0%	0.9%	7.9%	9.2%	35.4%	40.2%	0.8%	3.7%	1.9%	100.0%
	Richmond	0.0%	3.1%	0.0%	14.8%	32.8%	43.8%	2.4%	3.1%	0.00%	100.0%
	San Bruno	0.0%	0.0%	12.6%	3.0%	41.4%	12.1%	14.2%	10.1%	6.6%	100.0%
	San Francisco	0.0%	5.6%	8.7%	6.9%	32.8%	36.9%	5.8%	1.3%	2.0%	100.0%
	San Leandro	0.0%	0.0%	3.4%	8.4%	44.1%	44.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	S. F. Bay Area Total	**0.6%**	**3.9%**	**7.2%**	**12.3%**	**30.5%**	**35.2%**	**4.9%**	**2.9%**	**2.5%**	**100.0%**
	U. S. Total	**0.9%**	**3.7%**	**6.2%**	**17.4%**	**21.0%**	**38.9%**	**4.5%**	**5.2%**	**2.2%**	**100.0%**

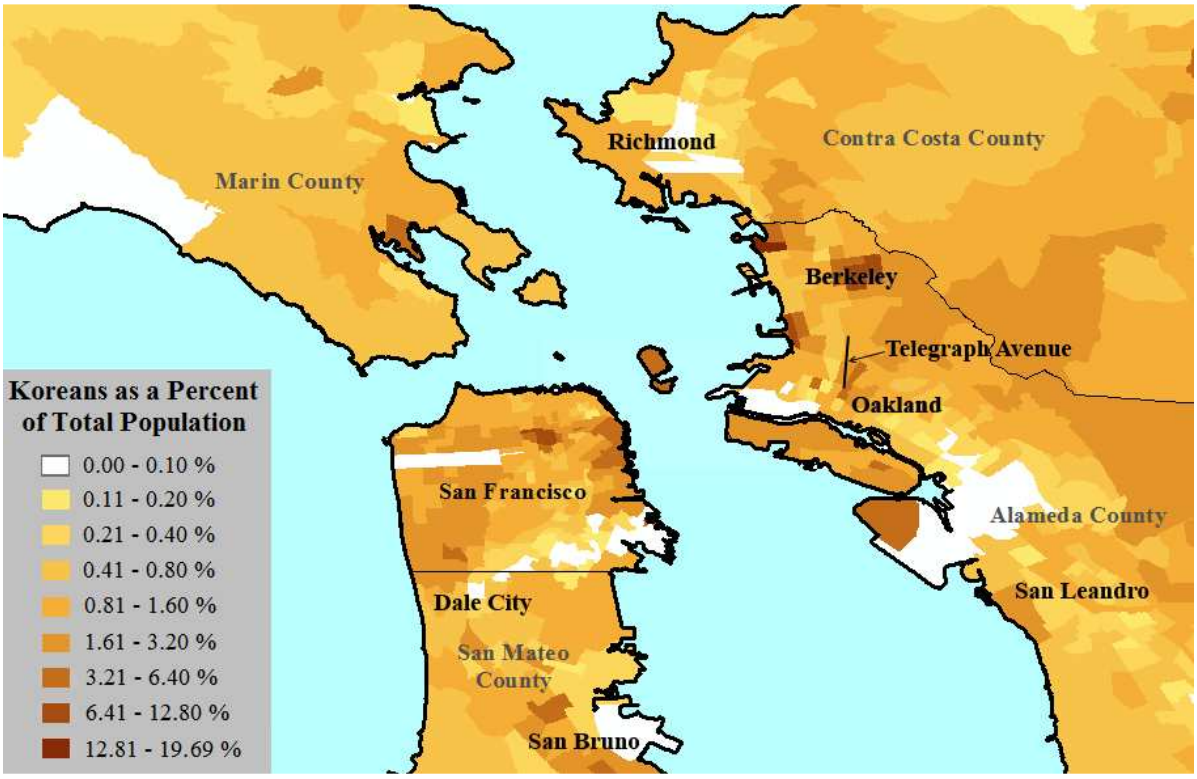
Table 30. Numbers of Koreans Employed by Industry Type in Selected San Francisco Bay Area Places, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF4b, NPB61.

	Place	Agriculture	Construction	Finance	Manufacturing	Retail	Service	Transportation	Wholesale	Others	Total
Population	Berkeley	0	17	27	26	56	584	0	26	40	776
	Dale City	0	31	12	17	100	182	40	5	14	401
	Oakland	13	33	89	28	106	626	16	18	90	1,019
	Richmond	0	16	30	38	43	134	14	0	0	275
	San Bruno	0	7	0	19	4	48	50	0	22	187
	San Francisco	0	117	451	219	600	2,350	154	80	388	4,359
	San Leandro	0	11	6	52	20	122	26	0	21	258
	S. F. Bay Area Total	**19**	**606**	**1,242**	**1,928**	**2,345**	**8,550**	**786**	**459**	**1,201**	**17,136**
	U. S. Total	**1,657**	**15,138**	**32,370**	**59,632**	**89,091**	**258,949**	**17,692**	**22,242**	**29,990**	**526,761**
Percentage	Berkeley	0.0%	2.2%	3.5%	3.4%	7.2%	75.3%	0.00%	3.3%	5.1%	100.0%
	Dale City	0.0%	7.7%	3.0%	4.2%	24.9%	45.4%	10.0%	1.3%	3.5%	100.0%
	Oakland	1.3%	3.2%	8.7%	2.8%	10.4%	61.4%	1.6%	1.8%	8.8%	100.0%
	Richmond	0.0%	5.8%	10.9%	13.8%	15.7%	48.7%	5.1%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	San Bruno	0.0%	3.7%	0.0%	10.2%	21.9%	25.7%	26.7%	0.0%	11.8%	100.0%
	San Francisco	0.0%	2.7%	10.4%	5.0%	13.8%	53.9%	3.5%	1.8%	8.9%	100.0%
	San Leandro	0.0%	4.2%	2.3%	20.2%	7.8%	47.3%	10.1%	0.0%	8.1%	100.0%
	S. F. Bay Area Total	**0.1%**	**3.5%**	**7.2%**	**11.3%**	**13.7%**	**49.9%**	**4.6%**	**2.7%**	**7.0%**	**100.0%**
	U. S. Total	**0.3%**	**2.9%**	**6.1%**	**11.3%**	**16.9%**	**49.2%**	**3.4%**	**4.2%**	**5.7%**	**100.0%**

Table 31. Numbers of Koreans Employed by Industry Type in Selected San Francisco Bay Area Places, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF4, NPCT085C.



Map 48. Percentage of Population Korean in San Francisco Bay Area by Census Tract, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.



Map 49. Percentage of Population Korean in San Francisco Bay Area by Census Tract, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

Strangely, perhaps, even as the Korean population along Telegraph Avenue declined, the city of Oakland kept promoting the area as its own "Koreatown" to attract visitors. In 2008, for example, officials gave the remaining Korean merchants twelve thousand dollars to put up banners reading "Oakland's Got Seoul." However, by that time, the place was hardly Korean at all. It was home to at least as many African Americans and to various Middle Eastern immigrants including Afghans, Ethiopians, and Lebanese. So, the new banners did not stay up long (*The San Francisco Chronicle*, February 1, 2010).

Although the decline of the Korean business district in Oakland because of economic reorientation was not particularly emotional, the loss the original Korean United Methodist Church building in San Francisco tugged at many hearts. This story began in early September 1992 when Pastor Suk Chong Yu of the church lobbied to move the congregation to a bigger building on Judah Street on the city's west side (Map 48). Yu's argument was reasonable in that most church members now lived in that area and not Chinatown. However, the economic reality was that, to purchase the new building, they must first sell the original one (*The Korea Times*, September 14, 1992).

I discussed in Chapter 6 how this church building was the most important historical landmark in America for the entire Korean community. Thus, when news of the impending sale appeared, Soon Koo Hong and the Korean-American Heritage Foundation organized against the action and obtained signatures from historical-minded Korean Americans (*The Korea Times*, September 14, 1992). The pastor and his supporters were undeterred, however, and pushed ahead to sell the building to a Chinatown mortuary owner, Virginia Daphne, for $2.3 million. The Korean-American Heritage Foundation made a bid as well using donated money, but could not match Daphne's offer (*The Korea Times*, April 14, 1993).

The debate continued in August 1994 when some two hundred Korean pastors attended a world mission conference in San Francisco. They pledged to help the church buy a new building without selling the original, but this promise was not kept. Pastor Yu pushed ahead and ended up selling his building to the (Chinese) Quong Ming Buddhism and Taoism Society for $1.68 million, a lower offer than they had received earlier (*The Korea Times*, September 30, 1999). Today, the building is a Chinese Buddhist temple (Photo 24). The cross atop the roof is gone as well as the Korean language signboard in front (*NoeHill* 2014). More important, the Korean-American people lost a touchstone with their past, a landmark that identified San Francisco as the origin of their society.

Photo 24. The Former Korean United Methodist Church Building in San Francisco, Now a Chinese Buddhist Temple, November 9, 2013. Source: In Sappho We Trust (used with permission).

Seattle-Tacoma

The riot mentality from Los Angeles spread to Washington State as well, but only three Korean grocers reported damages between April 29 and May 1 of 1992. This number is small considering that the Seattle-Tacoma metropolitan region had the fifth largest Korean population in the U. S. at the time (Table 23). I suspect that two reasons explain this relative peacefulness. First, the size of local African-American population was smaller than the other large American cities. Second, and more important, ethnic tension between Koreans and African Americans there did not built like it did in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and elsewhere because the two groups of people did not confront each other on a daily basis. Koreans in Washington State only rarely established businesses in inner-city African American neighborhoods, even prior to the 1992 riot. Instead, they concentrated their efforts in suburban areas (Map 43).

Korean Americans across the western states were aware immediately ethnic businesses in the Puget Sound area had largely escaped damage in 1992. This awareness raised the region's profile and made it a popular spot for relocation and for new migrants alike. By 2000, the local Korean population already had grown larger than the one in San Francisco by 2010 it had bypassed Chicago as well to become the fourth largest in the nation (Table 23). Exact numbers are not available, but authorities agree that the largest number of riot victims in Los Angeles who left the city moved to Seattle while smaller groups migrated to Portland and New York City (Min 1996, 71). The influx of retailers from Los Angeles, in fact, was sufficient to maintain the number of Korean-owned small stores in the Seattle and Tacoma metropolitan region at almost same level between 1990 and 2000, a time when this type of business shrank almost everywhere else following a national trend (Tables 32 and 33). It also is interesting to point out that the

numbers of Puget Sound Koreans in retail trade in suburbanized places such as Bellevue and Lynnwood grew significantly while the numbers in inner cities decreased during the same period.

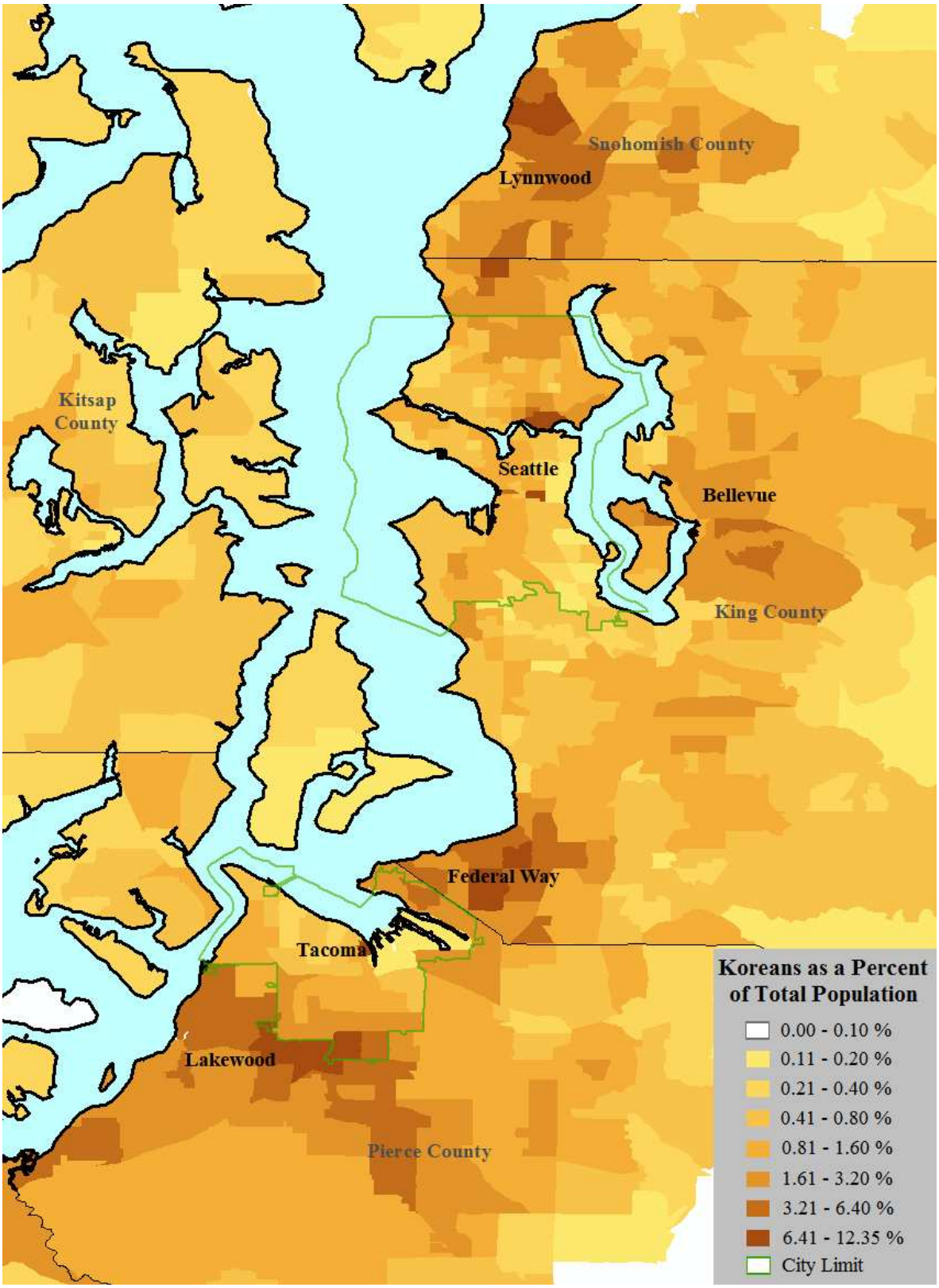
	Place	Agriculture	Construction	Finance	Manufacturing	Retail	Service	Transportation	Wholesale	Others	Total
Population	Bellevue	0	5	16	35	140	159	39	17	4	415
	Federal Way	0	10	49	223	281	260	80	22	8	933
	Lakewood	4	22	36	210	215	269	0	37	18	811
	Lynnwood	0	0	7	58	48	71	37	8	0	229
	Seattle	16	61	65	247	518	563	58	79	50	1,657
	Tacoma	26	0	25	216	284	211	17	96	74	949
	Seattle-Tacoma Metro region Total	**130**	**181**	**454**	**2,042**	**3,224**	**3,363**	**480**	**460**	**259**	**10,593**
	U. S. Total	**2,611**	**11,068**	**18,792**	**52,281**	**63,222**	**117,161**	**13,492**	**15,573**	**6,698**	**300,898**
Percentage	Bellevue	0.0%	1.2%	3.9%	8.4%	33.7%	38.3%	9.4%	4.1%	1.0%	100.0%
	Federal Way	0.0%	1.1%	5.3%	23.9%	30.1%	27.9%	8.6%	2.3%	0.8%	100.0%
	Lakewood	0.5%	2.7%	4.4%	25.9%	26.5%	33.2%	0.0%	4.6%	2.2%	100.0%
	Lynnwood	0.0%	0.0%	3.1%	25.3%	21.0%	31.0%	16.1%	3.5%	0.0%	100.0%
	Seattle	1.0%	3.7%	3.9%	14.9%	31.3%	34.0%	3.5%	4.7%	3.0%	100.0%
	Tacoma	2.8%	0.0%	2.6%	22.8%	29.9%	22.2%	1.8%	10.1%	7.8%	100.0%
	Seattle-Tacoma Metro region Total	**1.2%**	**1.7%**	**4.3%**	**19.3%**	**30.4%**	**31.8%**	**4.5%**	**4.3%**	**2.5%**	**100.0%**
	U. S. Total	**0.9%**	**3.7%**	**6.2%**	**17.4%**	**21.0%**	**38.9%**	**4.5%**	**5.2%**	**2.2%**	**100.0%**

Table 32. Numbers of Koreans Employed by Industry Type in Selected Places within the Seattle and Tacoma Metropolitan Region, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF4b, NPB61.

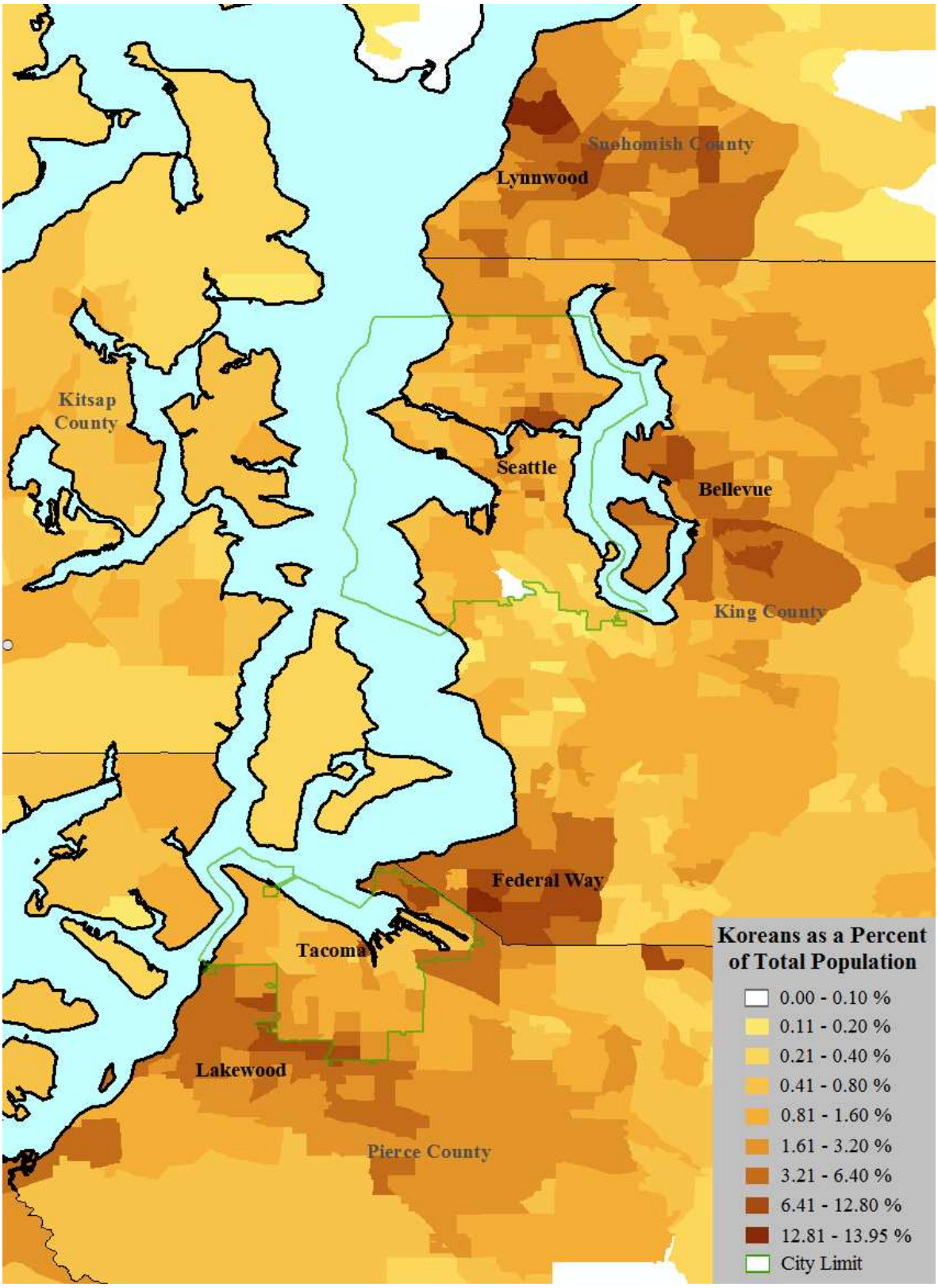
	Place	Agriculture	Construction	Finance	Manufacturing	Retail	Service	Transportation	Wholesale	Others	Total
Population	Bellevue	0	54	112	67	241	586	73	47	86	1,266
	Federal Way	0	91	126	226	242	909	164	101	82	1,941
	Lakewood	11	40	51	96	198	515	17	26	52	1,006
	Lynnwood	0	0	0	81	109	232	14	7	28	471
	Seattle	0	68	200	203	430	1,568	87	20	296	2,872
	Tacoma	0	67	80	345	216	812	79	61	78	1,738
	Seattle-Tacoma Metro region Total	**49**	**506**	**1,201**	**2,112**	**3,356**	**9,385**	**996**	**682**	**1,219**	**19,506**
	U. S. Total	**1,657**	**15,138**	**32,370**	**59,632**	**89,091**	**258,949**	**17,692**	**22,242**	**29,990**	**526,761**
Percentage	Bellevue	0.0%	4.3%	8.8%	5.3%	19.0%	46.3%	5.8%	3.7%	6.8%	100.0%
	Federal Way	0.0%	4.7%	6.5%	11.6%	12.5%	46.8%	8.5%	5.2%	4.2%	100.0%
	Lakewood	1.1%	4.0%	5.0%	9.5%	19.7%	51.2%	1.7%	2.6%	5.2%	100.0%
	Lynnwood	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	17.2%	23.1%	49.3%	3.0%	1.5%	5.9%	100.0%
	Seattle	0.0%	2.4%	6.9%	7.1%	15.0%	54.6%	3.0%	0.7%	10.3%	100.0%
	Tacoma	0.0%	3.9%	4.6%	19.9%	12.4%	46.7%	4.55%	3.5%	4.5%	100.0%
	Seattle-Tacoma Metro region Total	**0.3%**	**2.6%**	**6.2%**	**10.8%**	**17.2%**	**48.1%**	**5.1%**	**3.5%**	**6.2%**	**100.0%**
	U. S. Total	**0.3%**	**2.9%**	**6.1%**	**11.3%**	**16.9%**	**49.2%**	**3.4%**	**4.2%**	**5.7%**	**100.0%**

Table 33. Numbers of Koreans Employed by Industry Type in Selected Places within the Seattle and Tacoma Metropolitan Region, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF4, NPCT085C.

The Korean population in the Seattle and Tacoma metropolitan region definitely became more suburbanized in the 1990s and 2000s (Maps 50 and 51). Among the new communities, the one in Federal Way grew quickest because of assistance from the city government. This



Map 50. Percentage of Population Korean in the Seattle-Tacoma Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.



Map 51. Percentage of Population Korean in the Seattle-Tacoma Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

movement began with Michael Park, the owner of a dry-cleaning business and the president of the Korean Citizens Association in 1992. He suggested to Federal Way officials that they assist Korean business owners in the wake of the riot. Park's sincere efforts convinced these officials to convene a series of regular liaison with until Korean leaders to discuss tax policies, police activities, and similar concerns. Federal Way is the only city in Washington to have such an outreach program, and it has been effective (*The Northwest Asian Weekly*, December 24, 2005). Later, in June 1995, Park was appointed to the city council where he worked for almost two decades and even served as the city's mayor in 2000-2001 and in 2006-2007 (*The Federal Way Mirror*, March 29, 2010).

Although what happened in Los Angeles in 1992 was certainly tragic, this event also opened opportunities for other Korean communities to grow, especially those in western Washington. By 2010, the population there had become the third-largest Asian ethnic group in the region, surpassing the Japanese (Census Bureau 2010). Also, as a lesson from 1992, the local Korean Americans made greater efforts to socialize with other local groups and to become involved in local activities such as the Seafair parade (Photo 25).

Photo 25. Seattle-Washington State Korean-American Association Participating in a Seafair Parade in Seattle, July, 2009. Source: Sean O'Neill (used with permission).

Portland

Because it was the only major city on the West Coast to escape damage to Korean businesses during the 1992 riot, Portland now has the highest percentage of such enterprises among the regional cities (Tables 24 and 25). Beaverton remains the major focus but Aloha and Hillsboro, cities in Washington County farther away from Portland proper, now have significant numbers of ethnic businesses as well (Tables 34 and 35).

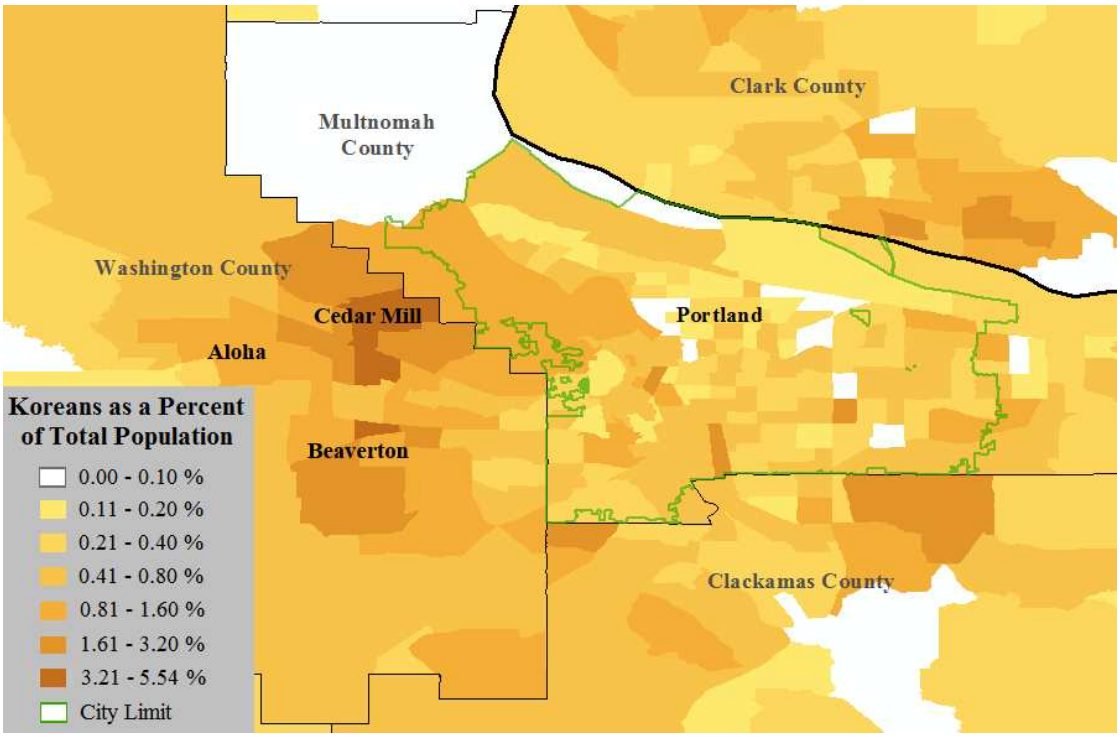
Just like in other western cities, the Korean population in Portland has clustered around their businesses. Beaverton and a few other towns in Washington County have been continuously popular, including in 2000 and 2010 (Maps 52 and 53). This distribution contrasts

	Place	Agriculture	Construction	Finance	Manufacturing	Retail	Service	Transportation	Wholesale	Others	Total
Population	Aloha	0	0	0	27	11	7	0	0	0	45
	Beaverton	0	0	5	79	87	148	32	14	0	365
	Hillsboro	0	0	0	28	18	0	0	0	0	46
	Portland	0	7	55	104	285	304	0	55	0	810
	Portland Metro Total	**9**	**14**	**106**	**455**	**870**	**798**	**141**	**154**	**17**	**2,564**
	U. S. Total	**1,657**	**15,138**	**32,370**	**59,632**	**89,091**	**258,949**	**17,692**	**22,242**	**29,990**	**526,761**
Percentage	Aloha	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	60.0%	24.4%	15.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Beaverton	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	21.6%	23.8%	40.6%	8.8%	3.8%	0.0%	100.0%
	Hillsboro	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	60.9%	39.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Portland	0.0%	0.9%	6.8%	12.8%	35.2%	37.5%	0.0%	6.8%	0.0%	100.0%
	Portland Metro Total	**0.4%**	**0.5%**	**4.1%**	**17.8%**	**33.9%**	**31.1%**	**5.5%**	**6.0%**	**0.7%**	**100.0%**
	U. S. Total	**0.9%**	**3.7%**	**6.2%**	**17.4%**	**21.0%**	**38.9%**	**4.5%**	**5.2%**	**2.2%**	**100.0%**

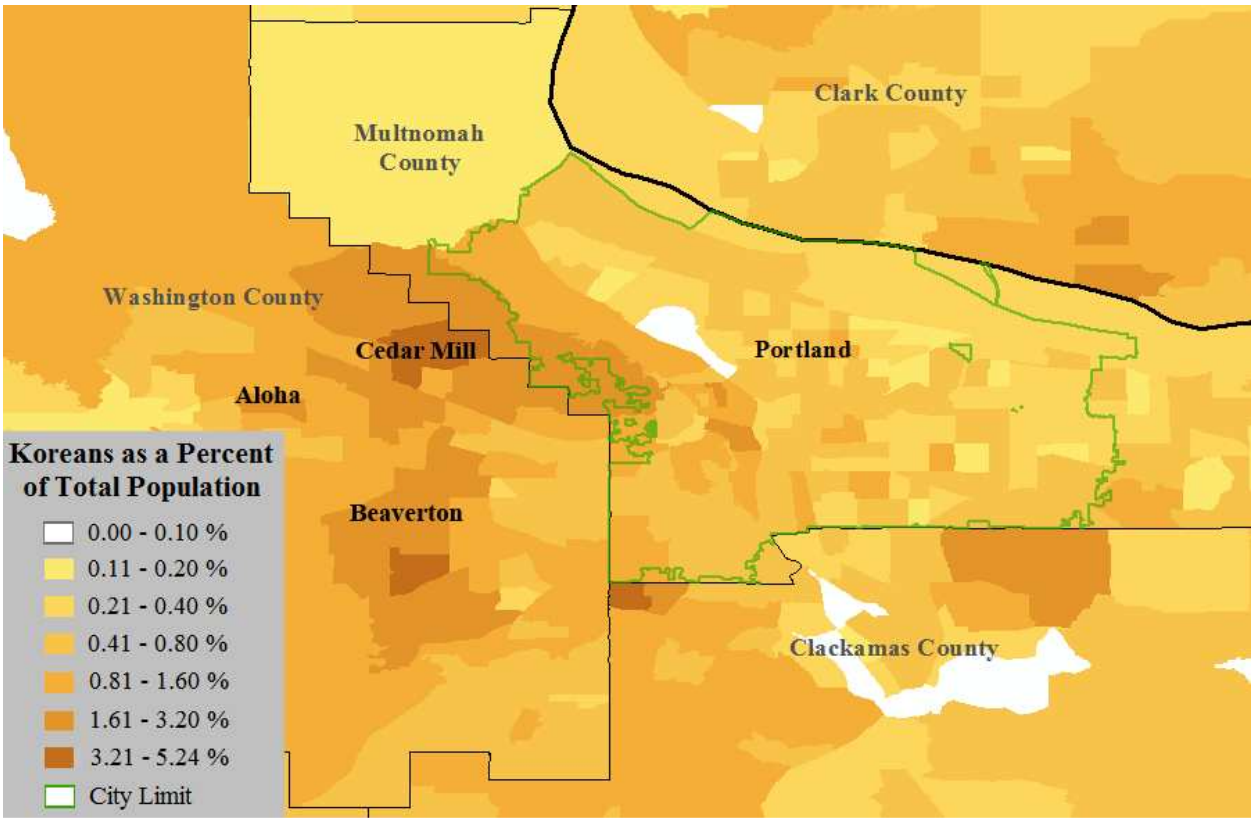
Table 34. Numbers of Koreans Employed by Industry Type in the Portland Metropolitan Region, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF4b, NPB61.

	Place	Agriculture	Construction	Finance	Manufacturing	Retail	Service	Transportation	Wholesale	Others	Total
Population	Aloha	12	14	4	31	19	87	11	0	0	178
	Beaverton	0	25	30	77	80	329	28	9	14	592
	Hillsboro	0	17	16	92	60	115	6	10	0	316
	Portland	0	42	77	70	335	574	35	53	83	1,269
	Portland Metro Total	**12**	**131**	**234**	**517**	**853**	**2,127**	**117**	**178**	**194**	**4,363**
	U. S. Total	**1,657**	**15,138**	**32,370**	**59,632**	**89,091**	**258,949**	**17,692**	**22,242**	**29,990**	**526,761**
Percentage	Aloha	6.7%	7.9%	2.3%	17.4%	10.7%	48.9%	6.1%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Beaverton	0.0%	4.2%	5.1%	13.0%	13.5%	55.6%	4.7%	1.5%	2.4%	100.0%
	Hillsboro	0.0%	5.4%	5.0%	29.1%	19.0%	36.4%	1.9%	3.2%	0.0%	100.0%
	Portland	0.0%	3.3%	6.1%	5.5%	26.4%	45.2%	2.8%	4.2%	6.5%	100.0%
	Portland Metro Total	**0.3%**	**3.0%**	**5.3%**	**11.8%**	**19.6%**	**48.8%**	**2.7%**	**4.1%**	**4.4%**	**100.0%**
	U. S. Total	**0.3%**	**2.9%**	**6.1%**	**11.3%**	**16.9%**	**49.2%**	**3.4%**	**4.2%**	**5.7%**	**100.0%**

Table 35. Numbers of Koreans Employed by Industry Type in the Portland Metropolitan Region, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF4, NPCT085C.



Map 52. Percentage of Population Korean in Portland by Census Tract, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.



Map 53. Percentage of Population Korean in Portland by Census Tract, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

with a clustering of Vietnamese immigrants on the other side of Portland in Multnomah County and with an absence of any clustering for the local Chinese and Japanese populations (Gibson and Abbott 2002).

Other than the case of Federal Way, Washington, Beaverton, Oregon, represents one of best examples of an immigrant Asian culture coming into a small American community without conflict. With its fast-growing Korean population, Beaverton on May 1, 1989, became a sister city of Cheonan, a major high-tech center in South Korea. The two places have been active in exchanging cultural and economic programs, including regular meetings of officials (*The Asian Reporter*, July 21, 2009). For the convenience of Korean customers in the area, USPS offers postal services in both English and Korean at their branch in the Hyundai Market (*The Asian*

Reporter, June 5, 2007). The city also provides other exotic specialities, including a *jim-jil bang*, the Korean -style public sauna. Instead of all customers sharing a single hot-steam room, this sauna features several options. Among the most popular are a jade room (a low-heat sauna lined with jade that appeals to women), a salt room (higher heat lined with sea salt), a cool room that uses tonic pods, and a Finnish cedar sauna enhanced with mugwort (*The Oregonian,* April 16, 2006).

Chapter 9

Northeastern Urban Communities

Although nearly no historical links existed between Korean immigrants and the American Northeast prior to 1965, communities there eventually became this group's second-most popular urban destination, behind only the West Coast cities (Table 36). Still, this geographical distribution was not implausible, because the Northeast has always been the most urbanized section in the country. More jobs could be offered to the Asian immigrants there than in other American places.

	Group	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Population	Midwestern Cities	6,175	34,212	60,154	74,066	104,343
	Northeastern Cities	10,949	61,723	173,184	242,049	344,556
	Southern Cities	1,364	10,146	28,872	49,393	92,583
	West Coast Cities	14,248	93,354	241,738	333,510	479,820
	West Interior Cities	1,141	8,122	18,120	27,780	57,858
	Small Cities and Towns	35,253	147,036	276,781	501,629	627,662
	U. S. Total	**69,130**	**354,593**	**798,849**	**1,228,427**	**1,706,822**
Percent of U. S. Total Korean	Midwestern Cities	8.9%	9.6%	7.5%	6.0%	6.1%
	Northeastern Cities	15.8%	17.4%	21.7%	19.7%	20.2%
	Southern Cities	2.0%	2.9%	3.6%	4.0%	5.4%
	West Coast Cities	20.6%	26.3%	30.3%	27.1%	28.1%
	West Interior Cities	1.7%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%	3.4%
	Small Cities and Towns	51.0%	41.5%	34.6%	40.9%	36.8%
	U. S. Total	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Table 36. Korean Population Distribution in Major U. S. Cities, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1, 1980_STF1, NT7, 1990_STF1, NP7, 2000_SF1a, NPCT005B, and 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

The general pattern of Korean expansion and occupation in the Northeast was similar to that in the West. Before 1990, the bigger cities such as New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, D. C. hosted not only the largest total number of immigrants, but also the highest percentage of growth. Smaller cities then gained ground (Table 37). In addition, this region saw a sharp decline of the popularity of retail trade as the business model of choice among Koreans between 1990 and 2000, also paralleling what was happening on the West Coast (Tables 38 and 39).

	City	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Population	Baltimore	762	6,175	12,940	17,934	28,348
	Boston	958	3,623	8,504	13,895	23,115
	New York	4,925	26,012	90,705	129,017	169,808
	Philadelphia	1,656	9,663	22,028	26,725	37,616
	Washington, D.C.	2,648	16,250	39,007	54,478	85,669
	Northeast Total	**10,949**	**61,723**	**173,184**	**242,049**	**344,556**
	U. S. Total	**69,130**	**354,593**	**798,849**	**1,228,427**	**1,706,822**

	City	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2010
Percent of Korean Population Growth	Baltimore	710.4%	109.6%	38.6%	58.1%
	Boston	278.2%	134.7%	63.4%	66.4%
	New York	428.2%	248.7%	42.2%	31.6%
	Philadelphia	483.5%	128.0%	21.3%	40.8%
	Washington, D.C.	513.7%	140.0%	39.7%	57.3%
	Northeast Total	**463.7%**	**180.6%**	**39.8%**	**42.3%**
	U. S. Total	**412.9%**	**125.3%**	**53.8%**	**38.9%**

Table 37. Korean Population Distribution in Major Northeast Cities, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010 and their Growth Rates. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1, 1980_STF1, NT7, 1990_STF1, NP7, 2000_SF1a, NPCT005B, and 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

	Place	Agriculture	Construction	Finance	Manufacturing	Retail	Service	Transportation	Wholesale	Others	Total
Population	Boston	11	56	148	619	689	1,833	25	112	70	3,563
	New York	113	1,152	2,502	4,443	15,045	12,405	2,099	2,969	376	41,104
	Philadelphia	42	154	248	1,752	3,860	2,805	249	325	119	9,554
	Washington, D.C. -Baltimore	107	1,534	1,190	1,627	8,993	8,288	1,047	623	1,065	24,474
	United States	**2,611**	**11,068**	**18,792**	**52,281**	**63,222**	**117,161**	**13,492**	**15,573**	**6,698**	**300,898**
Percentage	Boston	0.3%	1.6%	4.2%	17.4%	19.3%	51.4%	0.7%	3.1%	2.0%	100.0%
	New York	0.3%	2.8%	6.1%	10.8%	36.6%	30.2%	5.1%	7.2%	0.9%	100.0%
	Philadelphia	0.4%	1.6%	2.6%	18.3%	40.4%	29.4%	2.6%	3.4%	1.3%	100.0%
	Washington, D.C. -Baltimore	0.4%	6.3%	4.9%	6.6%	36.7%	33.9%	4.3%	2.5%	4.4%	100.0%
	United States	**0.9%**	**3.7%**	**6.2%**	**17.4%**	**21.0%**	**38.9%**	**4.5%**	**5.2%**	**2.2%**	**100.0%**

Table 38. Numbers of Koreans Employed by Industry Type in Northeastern Cities, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF4b, NPB61.

	Place	Agriculture	Construction	Finance	Manufacturing	Retail	Service	Transportation	Wholesale	Others	Total
Population	Boston	0	67	449	623	686	4,438	112	70	402	6,847
	New York	73	1,341	5,025	4,447	11,056	27,873	2,550	3,673	3,181	59,219
	Philadelphia	32	250	519	1,495	3,020	6,380	172	404	530	12,802
	Washington, D.C. -Baltimore	7	2,171	1,811	1,810	6,010	19,574	1,022	752	3,210	36,367
	United States	**1,657**	**15,138**	**32,370**	**59,632**	**89,091**	**258,949**	**17,692**	**22,242**	**29,990**	**526,761**
Percentage	Boston	0.0%	1.0%	6.6%	9.1%	10.0%	64.8%	1.6%	1.0%	5.9%	100.0%
	New York	0.1%	2.3%	8.5%	7.5%	18.7%	47.1%	4.3%	6.2%	5.3%	100.0%
	Philadelphia	0.2%	2.0%	4.1%	11.7%	23.6%	49.8%	1.3%	3.2%	4.1%	100.0%
	Washington, D.C. -Baltimore	0.0%	6.0%	5.0%	5.0%	16.5%	53.8%	2.8%	2.1%	8.8%	100.0%
	United States	**0.3%**	**2.9%**	**6.1%**	**11.3%**	**16.9%**	**49.2%**	**3.4%**	**4.2%**	**5.7%**	**100.0%**

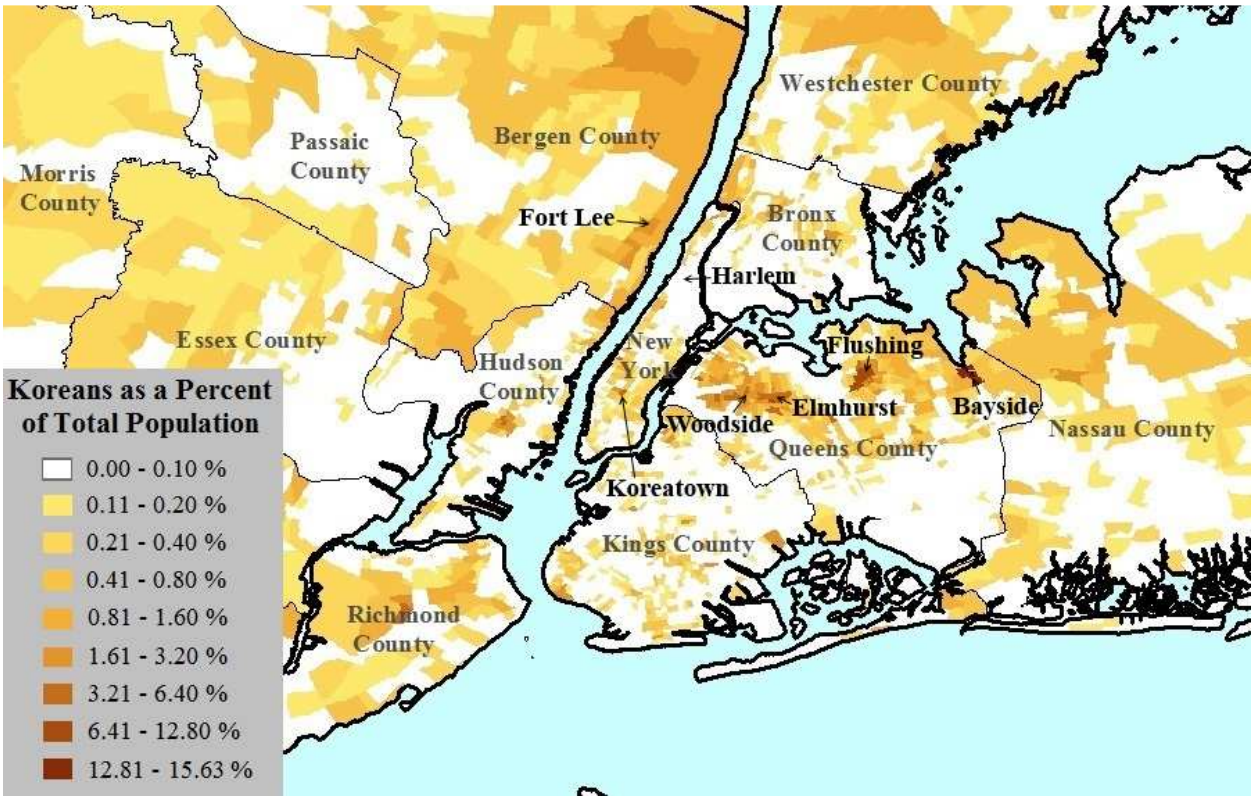
Table 39. Numbers of Koreans Employed by Industry Type in Northeastern Cities, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF4, NPCT085C.

Beyond the similarities, however, the experiences of Koreans in the Northeast were much more diverse than those faced by kinsmen in the West because of their relatively scattered populations. Geographical dispersion delayed the establishments of solid ethnic enclaves. Whereas such cores existed on the West Coast prior to 1970, they began to appear in the Northeast only in the mid-1970s. Moreover, instead of having a single ethnic center for each city, such as Koreatown in Los Angeles, multiple ethnic foci became the rule in most northeastern cities.

New York

Although the Korean population in New York was already the second largest in the U. S. by 1970 (Table 16), no visible ethnic enclave existed there. This absence of church or other social groupings made the adjustment to American life more difficult for new immigrants. In 1970, Christine Lee Zilka's parents came to the U. S. after her mother obtained a nursing job in a hospital at Elmhurst in Queens (Map 54). Like other Korean immigrants from that period, Mr. and Mrs. Lee did not have much knowledge about their new country and city. The only potential source of help was a single Korean church in Manhattan, but they did not know about its existence. So, seeking housing on their own, they ended up renting a motel room in Harlem. They spent a week of sleepless nights in this rough neighborhood, and then found an apartment in Woodside, only two stations away from the hospital where Mrs. Lee worked. These new quarters were only a few feet from a railroad track and noisy, but the Lees were happy. Back then, neither a Korean grocery store nor a restaurant existed. They bought their groceries in Chinatown. They made kimchi with western cabbage and cooked rice packaged by unfamiliar

companies. Only when Mr. Lee quit driving a taxi and opened a gasoline station near home could they meet many other Asians. His station, in fact, became a hub for the local Koreans, a place to exchange information about American lives and built business networks. As the Korean population grew, so did the ethnic information network (Zilka 2011).



Map 54. Percentage of Population Korean in New York City by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.

As I discussed in chapter 6, not many Koreans in northeastern cities were interested in having their own businesses until 1970. This changed after they began to hear success stories from their West Coast kinsmen (Min 1998, 14-15). Flushing (in Queens), as the locale with the highest concentration of Koreans, experienced the most significant changes (Map 54). By the early 1980s, several hundred small ethnic businesses, including restaurants, groceries, beauty salons, law offices, and medical clinics, had emerged throughout that county. Even though the

Koreans were only one of many minority groups in Queens (Table 40), their businesses were well known. This was because of a proclivity to erect huge signs in front of their stores and on neighborhood signboards following a practice started on the West Coast (Min 1998, 14-15).

Race/Ethnicity	Population	Percent
White	1,335,805	70.6%
Black	354,129	18.7%
Native	2,814	0.1%
Chinese	39,135	2.1%
Filipino	11,196	0.6%
Indian	21,736	1.1%
Japanese	5,487	0.3%
Korean	14,486	0.8%
Others	106,537	5.7%
Total	**1,891,325**	**100.0%**

Table 40. Ethnic Composition of Queens County, New York, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.

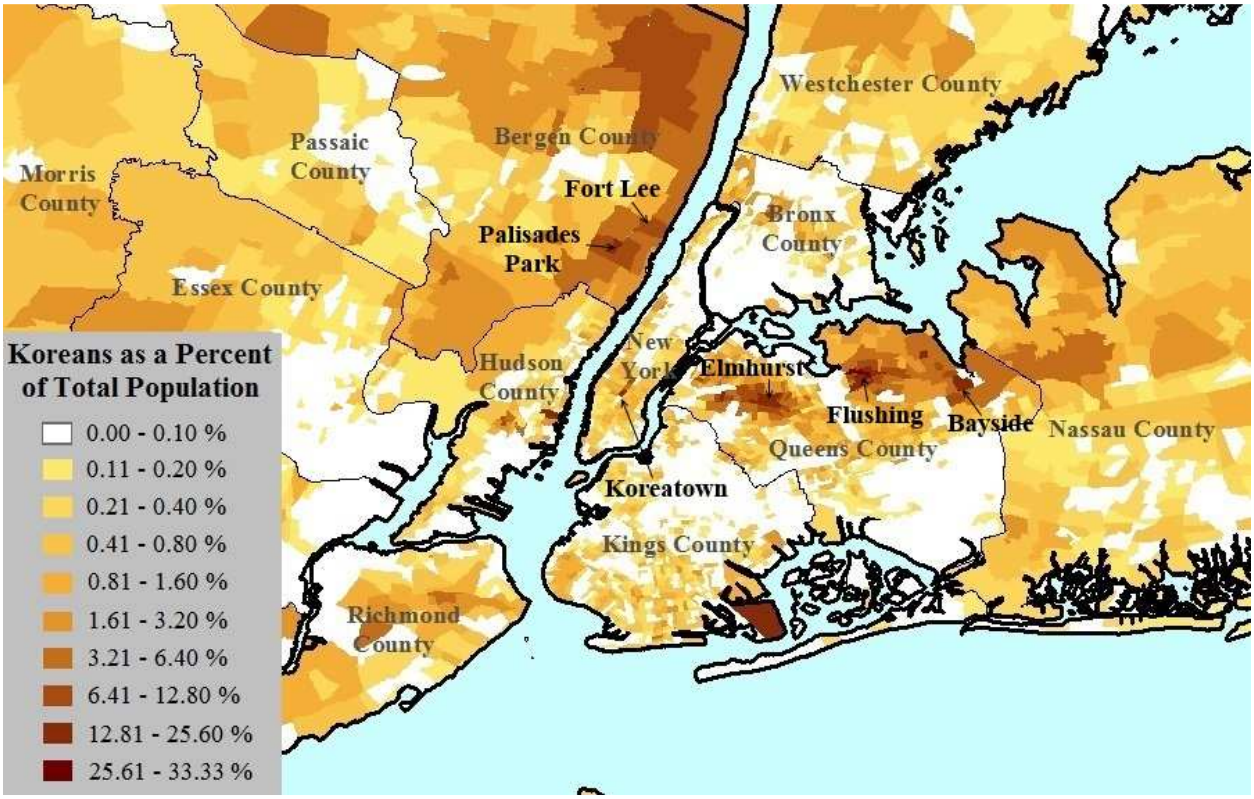
Although not every business was as successful as anticipated, most Koreans in Queens were satisfied with their new jobs and appreciated the social conditions found in their corner of New York. Mr. Chung, a fish market owner, said: "I made a good decision to come to America. Here there is little difference between rich and poor. What is most important is that, if you work hard, you will be rewarded to some extent." Mr. Choi, a greengrocer in Jackson Heights, added that: "Unlike Korea, here we do not have to care about the boss's social position. Moreover, here people can easily lead a Bohemian life, especially in New York" (Park 1997, 40-41).

While the Koreans in Flushing were operating folksy small shops, a larger-scale ethnic business district developed in Midtown Manhattan. According to Sejong Ha, who came to the U. S. as a university student in 1956 and moved to Manhattan in 1962, this section of town was in crisis at that time after several racial riots during the Civil Rights Movement. The strip of stores along Broadway between West 23rd Street and West 32nd Street especially showed decline. As real estate prices fell, many Koreans saw an opportunity to obtain commercial property in the heart of the city. Nearly every Korean of moderate wealth in the city invested there (*The Korea Times*, January 2, 2003 and Map 54). Judith Chung, the founder of Cici Shopping Center on 32th Street in 1970, remembered that the area still was sinister when she opened her business. First, she sold cigarettes and candy at the lobby of the Stanford Hotel. Then, after she got more money, she rented a larger space and her business expanded (*The Korea Times*, September 24, 2002).

The businesses created on Broadway differed from those in Flushing because the surrounding residential area had almost no Korean residents other than university students. In 1975, only five restaurants operated there compared to dozens of wholesale outlets. Most of these warehouses imported clothes and various gift items from Korea for resale to smaller companies. The demeanor in these operations was formal, with the Manhattan Koreans dressing conservatively and exchanging business cards (Kim 1981, 108-109).

Starting in the early 1980s, the Korean population expanded quickly across the Hudson River into New Jersey. Fort Lee and Palisades Park in Bergen County were foci (Map 55). Bergen was the location of choice instead of other suburban counties to the north (such as Westchester) or to the east in Long Island in part because commuting to Manhattan was fastest from Jersey. Land prices were relatively cheap there as well, plus the schools were good and the

crime rate low. Life was so successful, in fact, that many of the Korean warehouse and distribution corporations from Manhattan began to relocate to Bergen County (Min 2012, 54).



Map 55. Percentage of Population Korean in New York City by Census Tract, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.

Shim Jaegil was one of the Korean New Yorkers who moved to Bergen County in those early years. After he learned how to manage a restaurant in Manhattan, he opened one of his own at Fort Lee in 1979. Back then, Fort Lee was just an average suburban town without much of an Asian presence. Shim knew traditional Korean dishes would find only a small audience, so he promoted fusion menus aimed at middle-class Americans. His idea was simple but effective. Grilling meats after marinating them in Korean sources, he gained attention and his restaurant became the first Korean one in New York to attain popularity with mainstream Americans.

Soon, more Korean restaurants opened in Fort Lee, all targeting the general American consumer (*The Korea Times*, February 14, 2013).

Because Koreans in New York considered Bergen County to be their suburb of choice (Min 1998, 14-15), the average income there was higher than that of kinsmen in neighboring counties except for New York itself (Manhattan) (Table 41). Most of the New Jersey Koreans owned their own houses (Table 42), and many were recent immigrants who had brought considerable money with them (Table 43). By the year 2000, the percentage of Koreans in the city of Palisades Park exceeded forty percent, the highest total among all communities within the New York City area and third highest in the U. S. after Fullerton and Koreatown in Southern California (compare Map 56 to Map 47). This trend continued, and by 2010, Koreans had become the majority population in Palisades Park. In fact, the town's percentage of Koreans among the total local population was the highest in the country (Map 57).

County	Income
Bergen, NJ	$15,342
Bronx, NY	$8,501
Hudson, NJ	$10,193
Kings, NY	$9,708
New York, NY	$16,684
Queens, NY	$9,918
Richmond, NY	$11,809
Total New York	**$10,465**
Total United States	**$11,178**

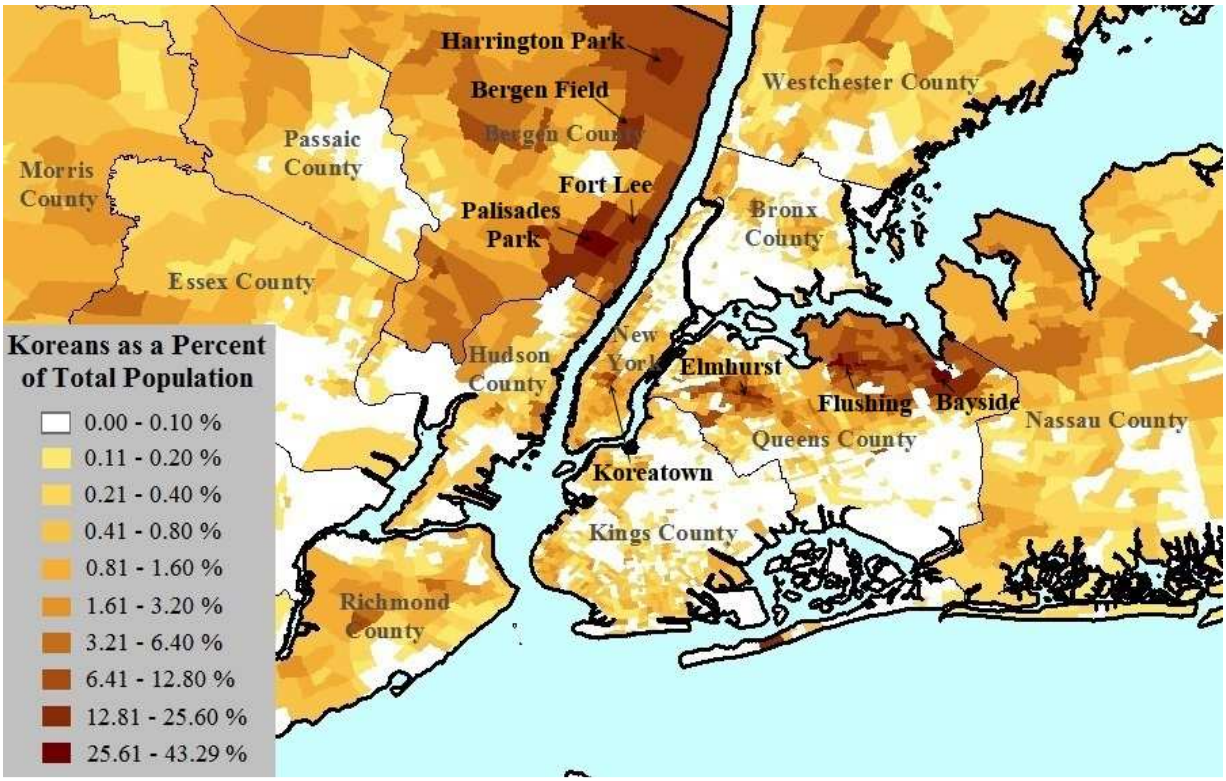
Table 41. Average Korean Income per Capita of the New York Metropolitan Counties, 1989. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF4b, NPB95A.

County	Occupied Unit			Percentage		
	Owner	Renter	Total	Owner	Renter	Total
Bergen, NJ	391	336	727	53.8%	46.2%	100.0%
Bronx, NY	43	502	545	7.9%	92.1%	100.0%
Hudson, NJ	39	356	395	9.9%	90.1%	100.0%
Kings, NY	70	695	765	9.2%	90.8%	100.0%
New York, NY	70	1,042	1,112	6.3%	93.7%	100.0%
Queens, NY	493	3,601	4,094	12.0%	88.0%	100.0%
Richmond, NY	140	125	265	52.8%	47.2%	100.0%
Total New York	**1,246**	**6,657**	**7,903**	**15.8%**	**84.2%**	**100.0%**
Total United States	**35,078**	**43,718**	**78,796**	**44.5%**	**55.5%**	**100.0%**

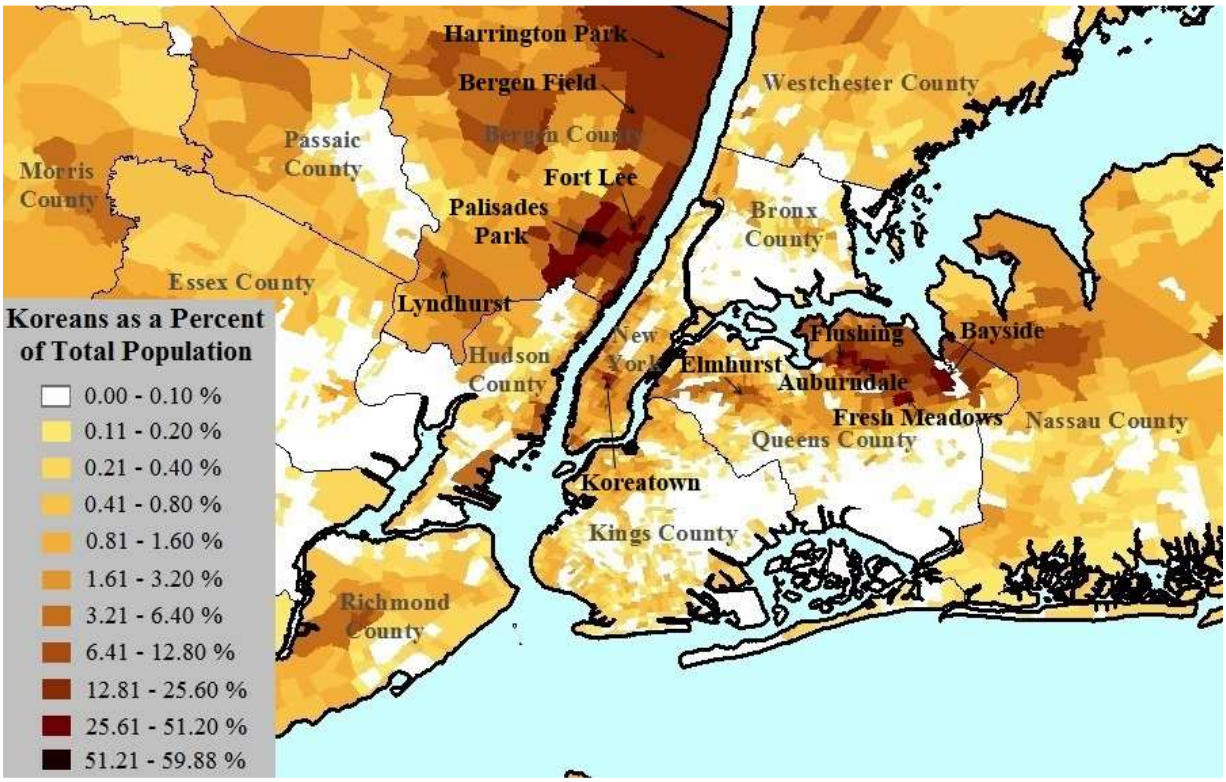
Table 42. Numbers of Korean-Owned and Rented Housing Units in the New York Metropolitan Counties, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF2b, NTB19A.

	County	Foreign Born					Native	Total
		-1969	1970-1979	1980-1984	1985-1986	1987-1990		
Population	Bergen, NJ	499	3,575	3,263	1,671	4,041	3,024	16,073
	Bronx, NY	130	1,167	1,274	844	1,151	342	4,908
	Hudson, NJ	89	683	903	493	543	92	2,803
	Kings, NY	227	1,643	1,735	1,043	1,011	949	6,608
	New York, NY	660	1,695	996	373	1,169	1,290	6,183
	Queens, NY	1,109	9,949	14,111	7,226	10,859	5,834	49,088
	Richmond, NY	119	1,046	753	241	359	413	2,931
	Total New York	**2,833**	**19,758**	**23,035**	**11,891**	**19,133**	**11,944**	**88,594**
	Total U. S.	**42,645**	**209,786**	**150,004**	**63,998**	**112,840**	**219,576**	**798,849**
Percentage	Bergen, NJ	3.1%	22.2%	20.3%	10.4%	25.1%	18.9%	100.0%
	Bronx, NY	2.6%	23.8%	26.0%	17.1%	23.5%	7.0%	100.0%
	Hudson, NJ	3.2%	24.4%	32.2%	17.6%	19.4%	3.2%	100.0%
	Kings, NY	3.4%	24.9%	26.3%	15.8%	15.3%	14.3%	100.0%
	New York, NY	10.7%	27.4%	16.1%	6.0%	18.9%	20.9%	100.0%
	Queens, NY	2.3%	20.3%	28.7%	14.7%	22.1%	11.9%	100.0%
	Richmond, NY	4.1%	35.7%	25.7%	8.2%	12.2%	14.1%	100.0%
	Total New York	**3.2%**	**22.3%**	**26.0%**	**13.4%**	**21.6%**	**13.5%**	**100.0%**
	Total U. S.	**5.3%**	**26.3%**	**18.8%**	**8.0%**	**14.1%**	**27.5%**	**100.0%**

Table 43. Year of Entry for Foreign-Born Koreans in the New York Metropolitan Counties, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF4b, NPB19.



Map 56. Percentage of Population Korean in New York City by Census Tract, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.



Map 57. Percentage of Population Korean in New York City by Census Tract, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

The 1992 riots in Los Angeles had only minor effects on New York Koreans. Whereas relocation characterized communities on the West Coast, the New Yorkers remained in their three original clusters. Flushing, for example, still has many Korean-owned small businesses and the shops still display the rather garish Korean language signs that originated in the 1970s (Photo 26).

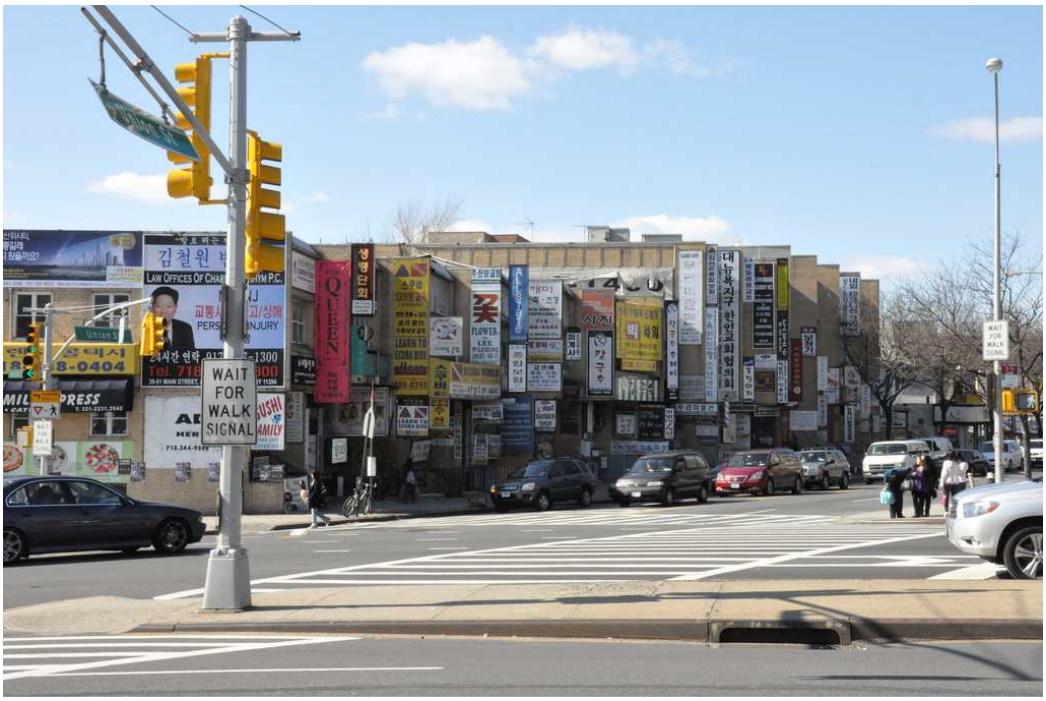


Photo 26. Korean Businesses at the Corner of Union Street and Northern Boulevard, Flushing, NY, April 12, 2009. Source: Radford Tam (used with permission).

The Korean business sector along Broadway in Manhattan survives as well. The block of West 32nd Street between 5th and 6th Avenues had so many Korean-operated businesses by the mid-1980s that became known as New York's Koreatown, with one segment of the street nicknamed Korea Way (Min 1998, 14-15 and Photo 27). Recently, the number of Korean businesses there has increased and diversified. A 2012 photograph, for example, shows a department store, a Korean-language newspaper distributor, a hair salon, a spa, and other various shops (Photo 28).

Photo 27. Korea Way Street Sign on West 32nd Street, between 5th Avenue and 6th Avenue, Manhattan, October 30, 2011. Source: Rachel So (used with permission).

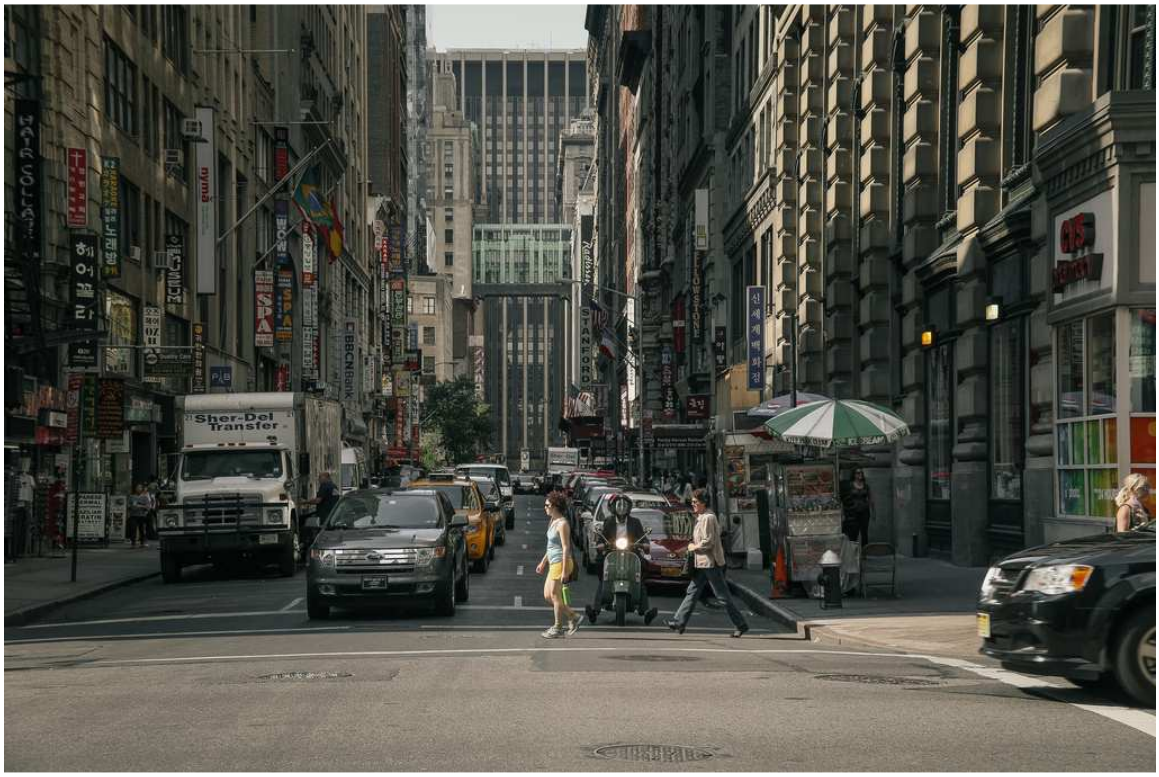


Photo 28. The New York Koreatown on West 32nd Street, between 5th Avenue and 6th Avenue, New York, September 22, 2012. Source: Stefan Georgi (used with permission).

The diversification of business in Koreatown actually was a matter of a survival. Korean wholesalers there started to lose ground about the year 2000 because of competition from Chinese sellers. Those newcomers sold goods manufactured in China at ruinously low prices. Ten years later, only thirty percent of the Korean-owned custom jewelry and wig businesses and less than ten percent of those selling bags, scarfs, and belts survived. According to Jongchul Lee, who has wholesaled hand bags locally since the 1980s, about fifteen Korean businesses similar to his existed until the early 2000s, but only himself and one other remained in 2012. More than fifty rival Chinese businesses established themselves during those twelve years (*The Korea Times*, October 4, 2012).

The New Jersey cluster of Koreans has maintained its status as a wealthy suburban neighborhood. Small businesses are common similar to the ones found in Queens, but the Bergen County stores generally look cleaner and more stylish (compare Photo 29 to Photo 26). In fact, the Koreans there live much like general, middle-class Americans. They go to large supermarkets to buy groceries and especially favor *H Mart* (also known as *Han Ah Reum*), the largest nationwide Korean-American supermarket chain. This company is based in the county (Lyndhurst-see Map 57) and operates in forty-two locations including eleven in metropolitan New York. Some of these stores are as big as well-known American supermarkets (Photo 30).

By dutifully operating their businesses and avoiding the racial violence of 1992, many Koreans in New York and other northeastern cities made their American dreams come true. Among the successful individuals was the Reverend Sun Myung Moon (1920-2012), the founder and self-proclaimed messiah of the Unification Church. Moon also was a powerful businessman and influential with Koreans and general Americans alike. His followers and businesses were scattered all over the U. S. and beyond, but Moon focused most of his projects in the American

Photo 29. A Section of Main Street in Fort Lee, New Jersey, October 13, 2012. Source: Doc Searls (used with permission).

Photo 30. H Mart Shopping Center in Ridgefield, New Jersey, April 20, 2008. Source: Wally Gobetz (used with permission).

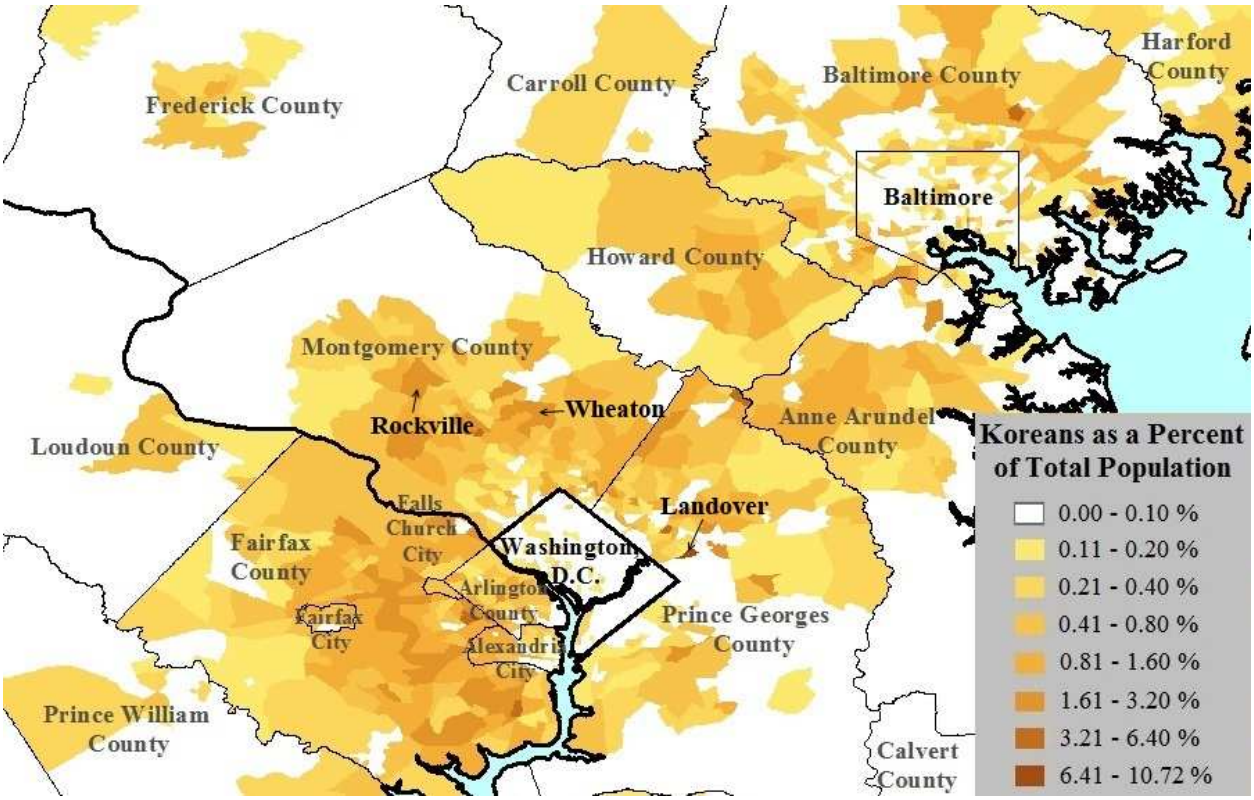
Northeast after settling in Tarrytown, New York, in 1971. No one knows exactly how much money his church collected from its members, but it is common knowledge that he became the richest Korean in the U. S. Moon's church owned several valuable properties in this region including the New Yorker Hotel that operated as a Ramada Inn franchise (Photo 31), the *Washington Times* newspaper founded by Moon in 1982 (Photo 32), and the University of Bridgeport in Connecticut (Levine 2003, 82). In addition, Moon became famous for conducting mass marriages of his followers over the years. One ceremony at Madison Square Garden on July 1, 1982 joined 2,075 couples. Another, in RFK Stadium in Washington, D. C. in late 1997, united some twenty-eight thousand couples (Price 2001, 27).

Photo 31. New Yorker Hotel, August 17, 2011. Source: Richard Johnson (used with permission).

Photo 32. *The Washington Times* Printing and Distribution Center in Washington, D. C., April 7, 2012. Source: Ryan Janek Wolowski (used with permission).

Washington, D. C.-Baltimore

Clusters of Korean population in the Mid-Atlantic States first appeared in the early 1970s. Like in New York, these early immigrants lived mostly in rented quarters. The Kent Village Apartments, an inexpensive complex in Landover, Maryland, was perhaps the earliest focus in the Washington, D. C. area (Map 58). Six Korean immigrant families lived there in 1972, but two years later, the number had increased to at least two hundred. Word had spread, of course, about Kent Village being cheap, relatively clean, and trouble free. At the same time, the apartment owner preferred Koreans as renters because, since they lacked English-speaking abilities, they did not complain much (Chae 2002).



Map 58. Percentage of Population Korean in the Washington, D. C.-Baltimore Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.

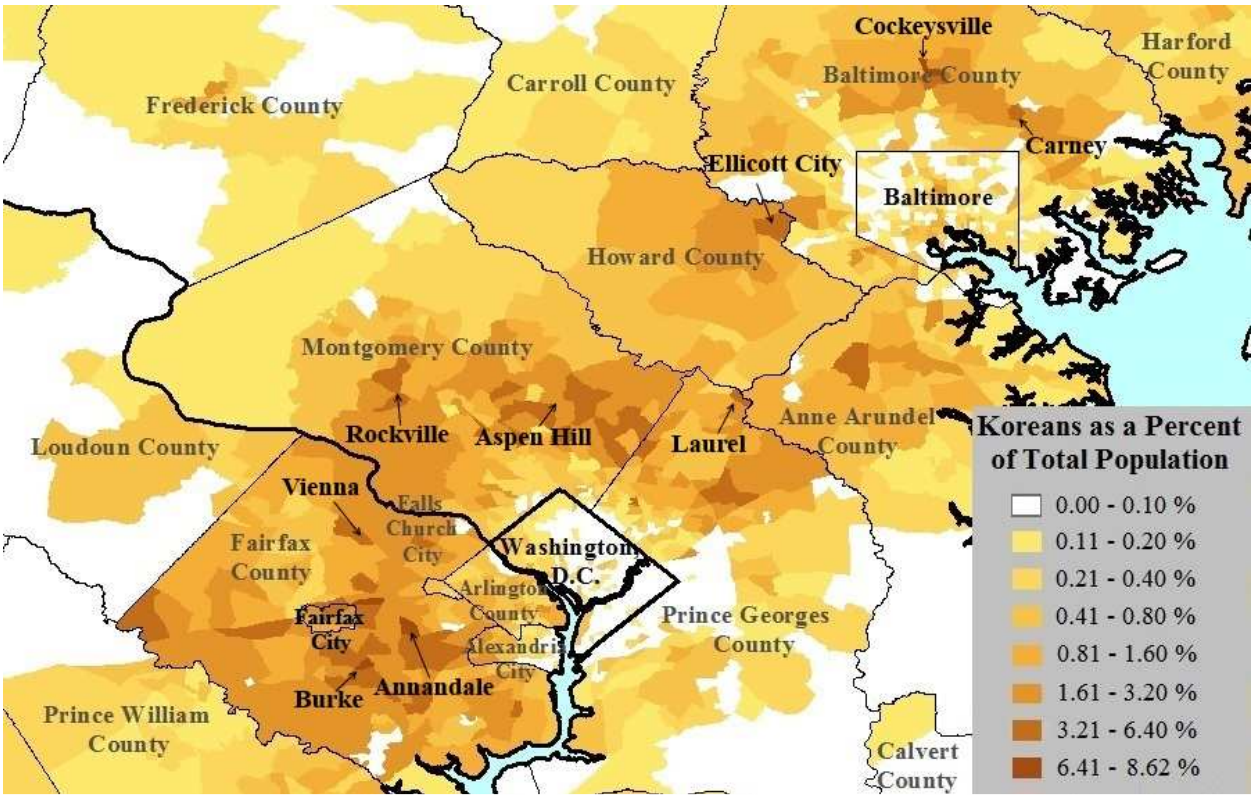
The Kent Village residents formed a tight, interconnected group by 1973, exchanging information and having social gatherings. The site also served as a base for expansion. By the mid-1970s, many Koreans had moved to Wheaton and Rockville in Montgomery County, Maryland. Their total by 1979 was about three hundred families. Then the flow turned toward Fairfax County, Virginia. The Arlington Tower Apartment in Arlington, the Culmore Apartment in Falls Church, and several complexes near Fort Myer all became centers (Chae 2002). Suburbanization started about 1980 (Map 58). A regional housing boom meant relatively affordable prices for everybody, and soon the percentage of home ownership among the Koreans in the Washington, D. C.-Baltimore metropolitan region was one of the highest in the nation (Table 44).

County	Occupied Unit			Percentage		
	Owner	Renter	Total	Owner	Renter	Total
Boston	257	420	677	38.0%	62.0%	100.0%
New York	1,246	6,657	7,903	15.8%	84.2%	100.0%
Philadelphia	1,085	1,129	2,214	49.0%	51.0%	100.0%
Washington, D. C. -Baltimore	2,695	2,788	5,483	49.2%	50.8%	100.0%
Total United States	**35,078**	**43,718**	**78,796**	**44.5%**	**55.5%**	**100.0%**

Table 44. House Ownership Status among the Koreans in Northeastern Cities, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF2b, NTB19A.

Once started, the suburbanization process accelerated. By 1990, the towns of Aspen Hill, Laurel, and Rockville, Maryland, all had large Korean populations. So did Annandale, Burke, Fairfax City, and Vienna in Virginia and Carney, Cockeysville and Ellicott City near Baltimore (Chae 2002 and Map 59). Among these towns, Annandale, which had been exclusively white (98 percent) until the late 1970s, emerged as the regional Korean center. The Asians established several commercial and religious institutions there as well as small businesses. Starting the 1990s, media outlets began to refer to Annandale as Washington, D. C.'s Koreatown (Singer, Hardwick, and Brettell 2008, 152-153). This was an exaggeration, however, since Koreans was still a minority even in 2000 (Table 45 and Map 60).

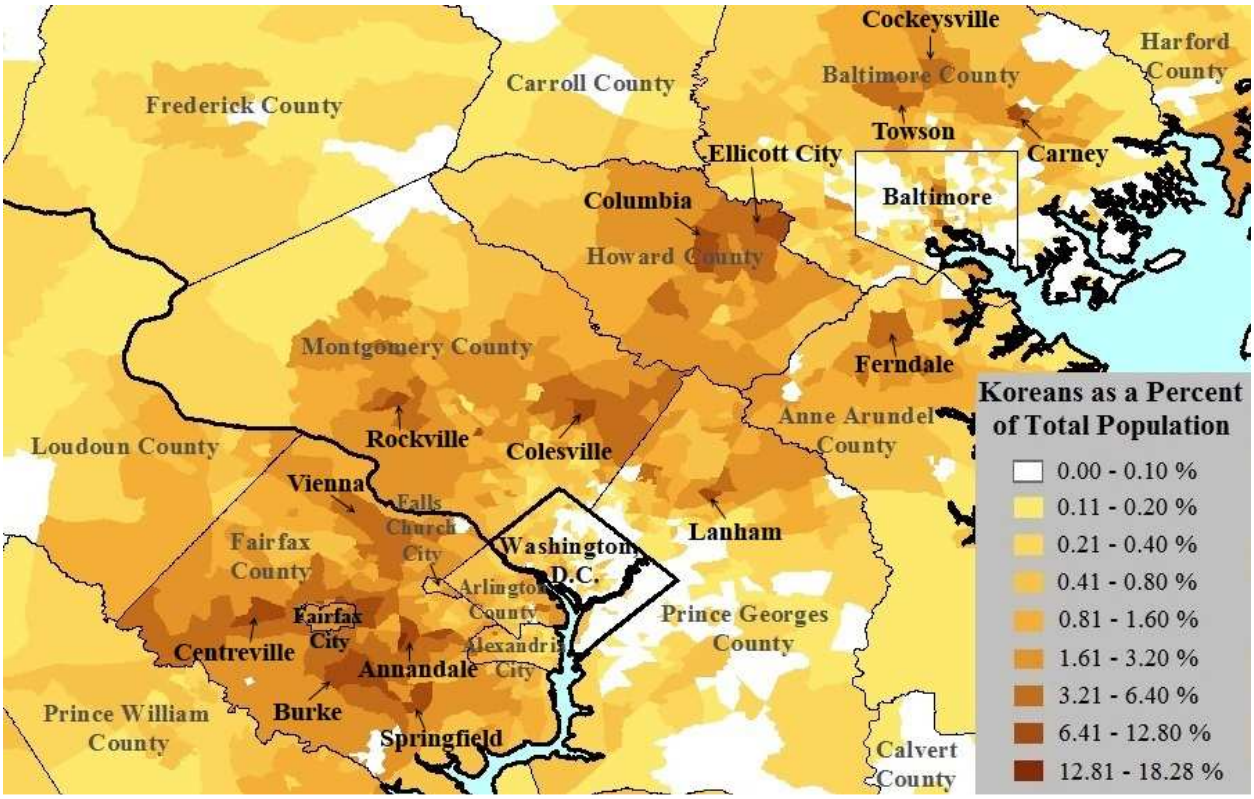
When I attended a high school in Washington, D. C. while living in Springfield (adjacent to Annandale) in the summer of 1999, Annandale was at its Korean peak. My aunt and I bought goods from its wide variety of ethnic stores, and the town seeming absolutely full of Koreans. This appearance was somewhat deceiving. While most of the businesses were indeed Korean owned and employed Korean workers, most area residents were still mainstream Americans.



Map 59. Percentage of Population Korean in the Washington, D. C.-Baltimore Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.

Race/Ethnicity	Population	Percent
White	35,473	64.5%
Black	3,224	5.9%
Indian	1,235	2.2%
Chinese	908	1.7%
Filipino	649	1.2%
Japanese	110	0.2%
Korean	3,651	6.6%
Vietnamese	3,173	5.8%
Others	6,571	11.9%
Total	**54,994**	**100.0%**

Table 45. Ethnic Composition of Annandale, Virginia, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF2, NPCT001A.



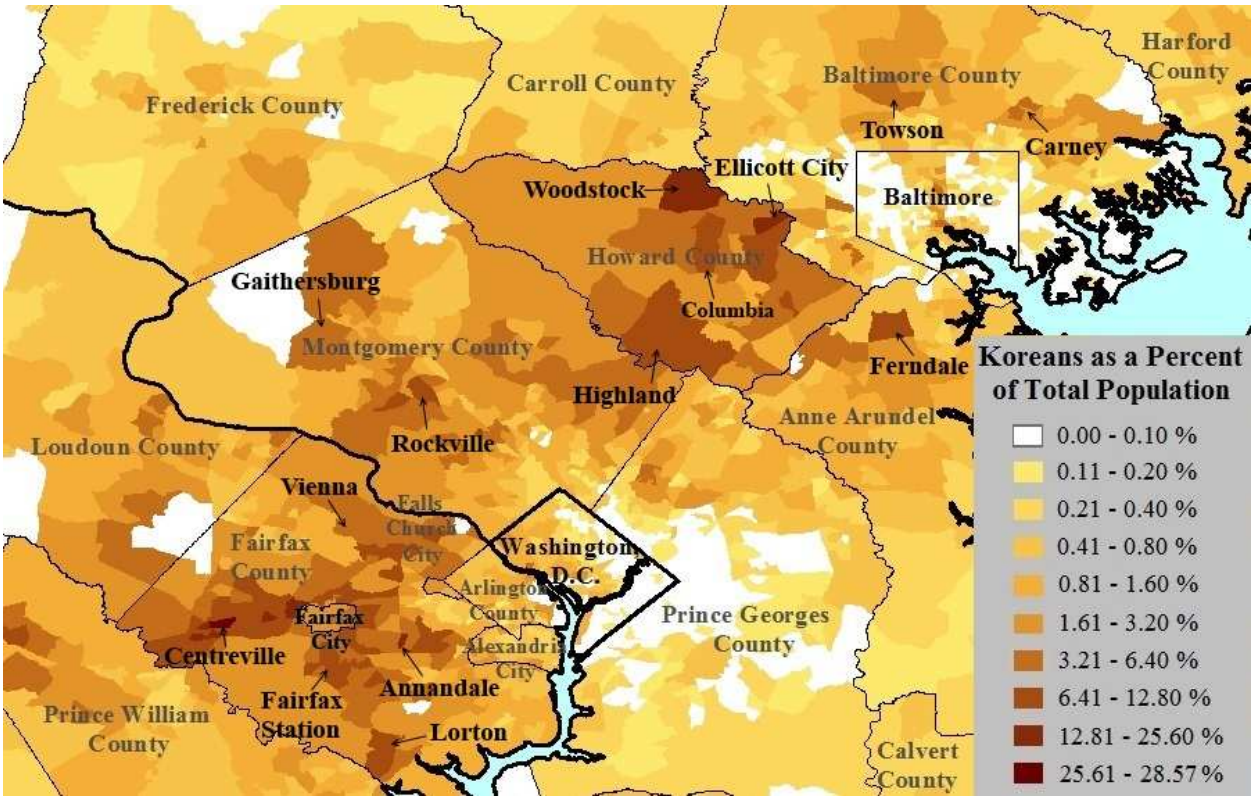
Map 60. Percentage of Population Korean in the Washington, D. C.-Baltimore Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.

One rarely saw Koreans traversing the city's main traffic ways, for example. The abundance of Korean workers is what created the image. Most of these were students who attended Northern Virginia Community College in Annandale. It was common knowledge that the Korean storeowners paid part-time workers well, but with cash money so as to avoid taxes and benefits. The salaries were tempting, and some students paid more attention to work than to their studies. My best friend at the time, Jihwan, had three jobs at one point. He waited tables in a restaurant during the afternoons and in a bar at night. When I thought he had no more time left, he managed to get a weekend job as a shopkeeper for a clothing store. He was just one of many, and thus my group of my friends made jokes that the local economy would fall apart if they stopped working.

The growing image of Koreatown for Annandale in the early 2000s naturally upset some old-time residents. A plan had existed, for example, to refurbish the downtown area to resemble the Civil War era, where people could walk on quaint sidewalks and purchase antique goods (*The Korea Times*, March 13, 2005). When Annandale sprouted modern-looking Korean stores instead of historic shops, tensions grew. No riot or other major incident occurred, but people were not happy. Mark Mills, a forty-six year old lifetime resident, said in a newspaper interview: "You don't feel you aren't needed here, but you definitely feel (the Koreans) can get along without you" (*The Washington Post*, March 13, 2005).

Tensions rose higher in Annandale in 2007 after a Korean gunman who had grown up in Annandale killed thirty-two people at Virginia Tech University in Blacksburg (*The Washington Post*, April 17, 2007). Of course, the shooter had mental issues and most Americans saw him as an individual, rather than an ethnic representative, but the Koreans in and near Annandale lived with fear for a long time. They remembered what had happened in Los Angeles in 1992 and knew that most of the Virginia Tech victims were from Northern Virginia. Many Korean-owned stores went out of businesses, and even more received threats (*The Korea Times*, April 20, 2007).

The Virginia Tech incident together with the continuing process of suburbanization hurt the continued ethnic development of Annandale and other inner-ring communities around the nation's capital and nearby Baltimore. Instead, many Koreans relocated to sites farther from the city center. By 2010, Howard County, midway between Washington, D. C. and Baltimore, had become a new favorite destination (Map 61). As far as symbolic landscapes are concerned, the major Korean effort in the region has been the placement of a bell in the Shilla Dynasty style at Meadowlark Gardens Court in Vienna, Virginia (Photo 33). This project of the Korean-



Map 61. Percentage of Population Korean in the Washington, D. C.-Baltimore Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

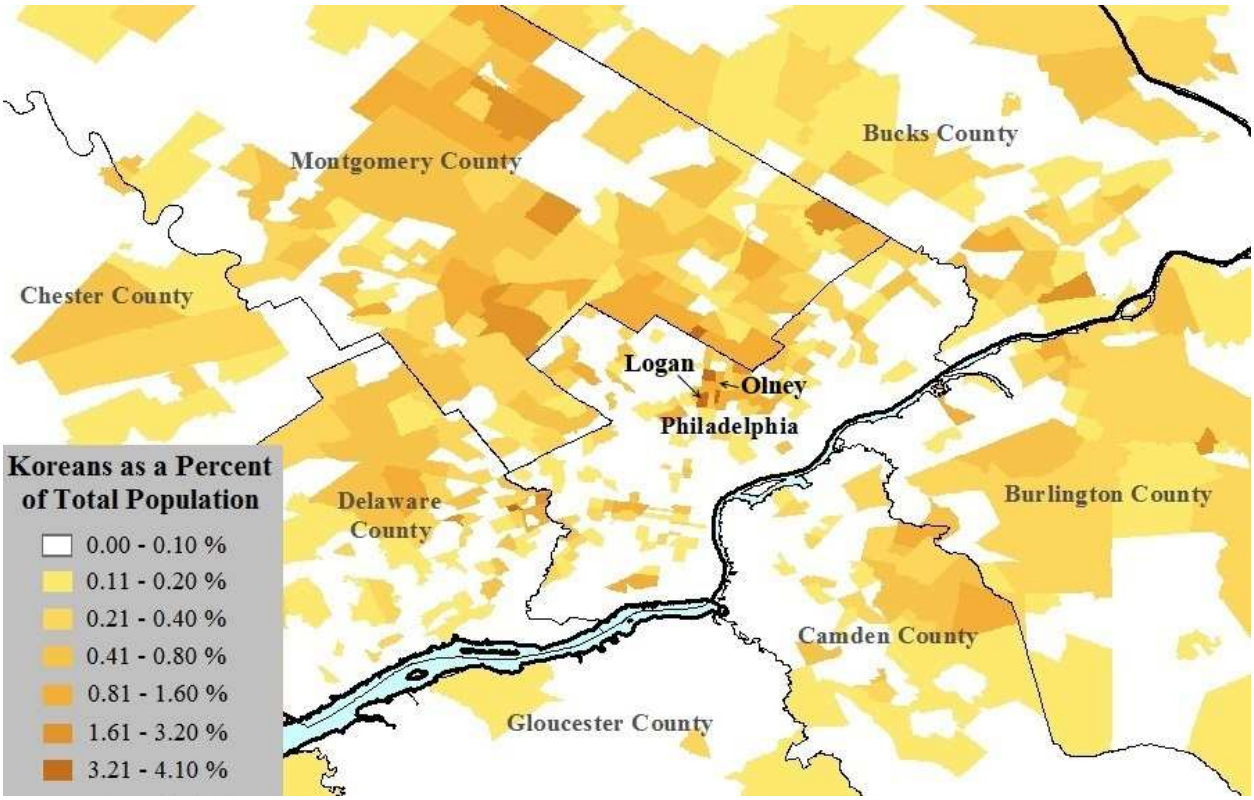
Photo 33. The Korean Bell Garden in Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, Vienna, Virginia, March 16, 2013. Source: Sandy Fleischmann (used with permission).

American Cultural Committee began in 2006 and opened to the public in May 2012 (*The Washington City Paper* May 21, 2012). Although no source explains the exact meaning of this "bell of peace," the Korean cultural committee probably intended it to embody hope for good relations with the larger community.

Philadelphia

Until 1970, the Koreans in Philadelphia were small in number and quite dispersed. They had no church building until 1971, instead sharing a site with an American congregation (Lee 1998, 131). This situation changed in the early 1970s when a wave of newly arrived immigrants settled in the Logan neighborhood of the city, a place once Jewish in character and then Ukrainian and South Asian. The Koreans invested heavily in this area for several years, but as more African Americans and Cambodian refugees moved in and conditions became crowded, this money moved eastward to Olney starting in the mid-1970s (Goode and Schineider 2010, 189). The financial transfers were reinforced by new settlers from the first generation of Korean graduate students at Temple, Drexel, and the University of Pennsylvania (Lee 1998, 55). By 1980, Olney and the entire North Philadelphia area had a sizeable Korean population (Map 62).

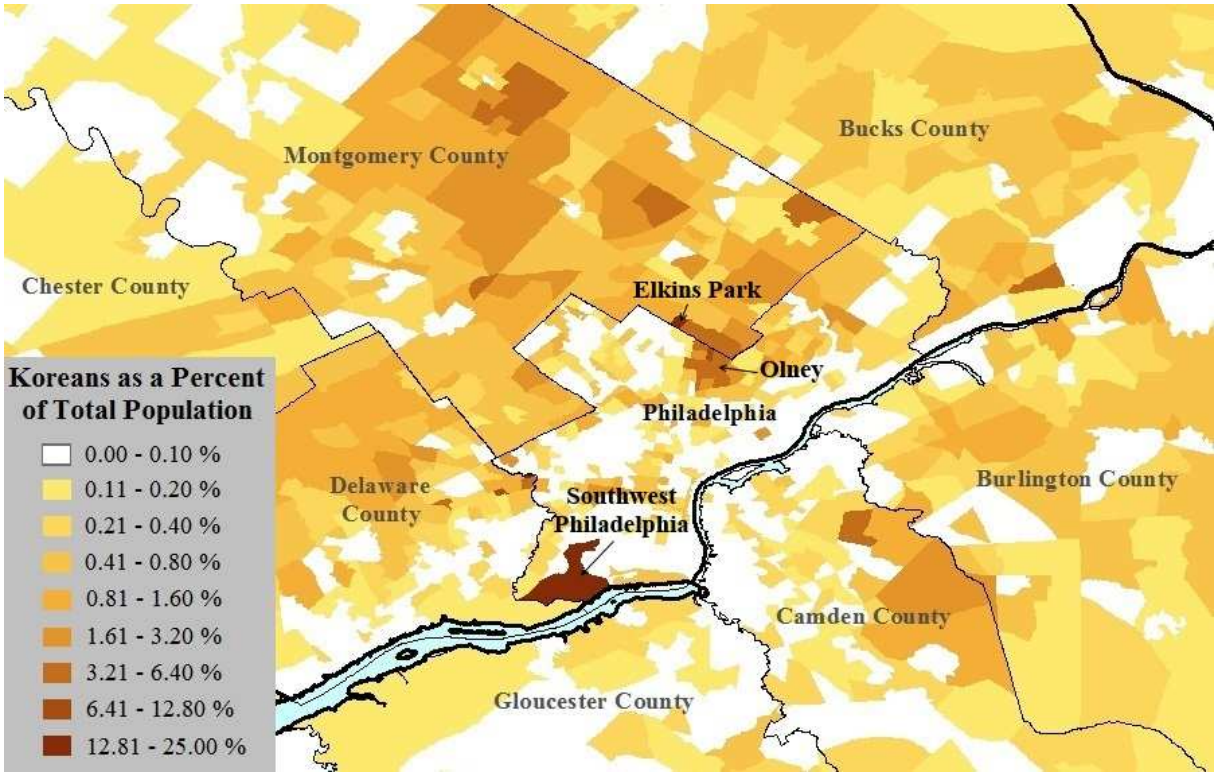
Like their countrymen in other cities, the Koreans in Philadelphia established business connections with each other through churches and social gatherings (Lee 1998, 55). The process began locally after a Korean pharmacist opened a store in Olney in 1984. Word spread to other entrepreneurs and ethnic businesses began to pour into the surrounding area. Soon, hundreds of Korean companies existed locally and older Olney residents got upset (Lee 1998, 55-56).



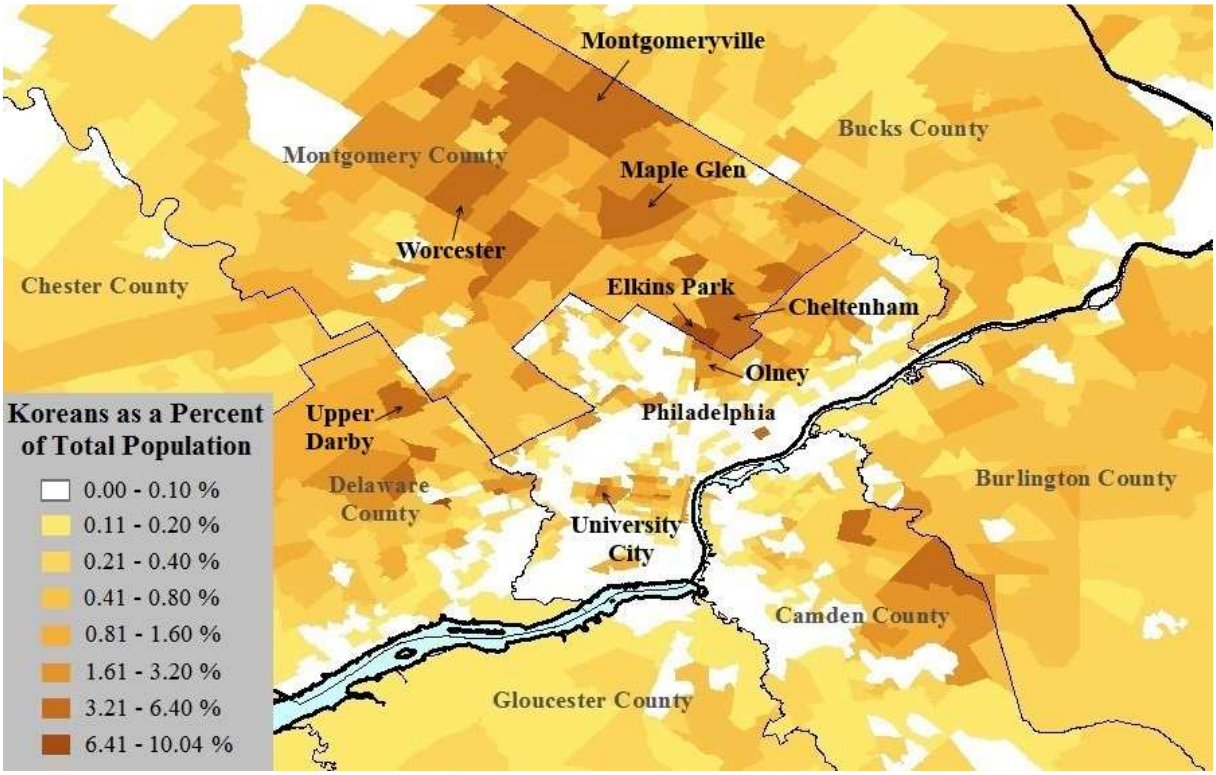
Map 62. Percentage of Population Korean in the Philadelphia Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.

Tensions increased when the Korean Association of Greater Philadelphia made plans to erect Korean language street signs in parts of Olney. City officials approved the plan, but most of the new signs were bent and spray-painted by vandals within a week of their installation (*The New York Times*, August 6, 1986). No Korean store received any significant threat, but ethnic businesses started to decline about 1990 (Map 63).

In the 1990s, the Koreans in Philadelphia began to suburbanize. By 2000, they were concentrated north of Olney in towns such as Cheltenham in Montgomery County and in western suburbs such as Upper Darby in Delaware County (Map 64). Only poorer Koreans stayed behind in Philadelphia, and the income gap between the city and its suburban counties increased (Table 46). This outward trend is continuing (Map 65). Only very limited numbers of Korean



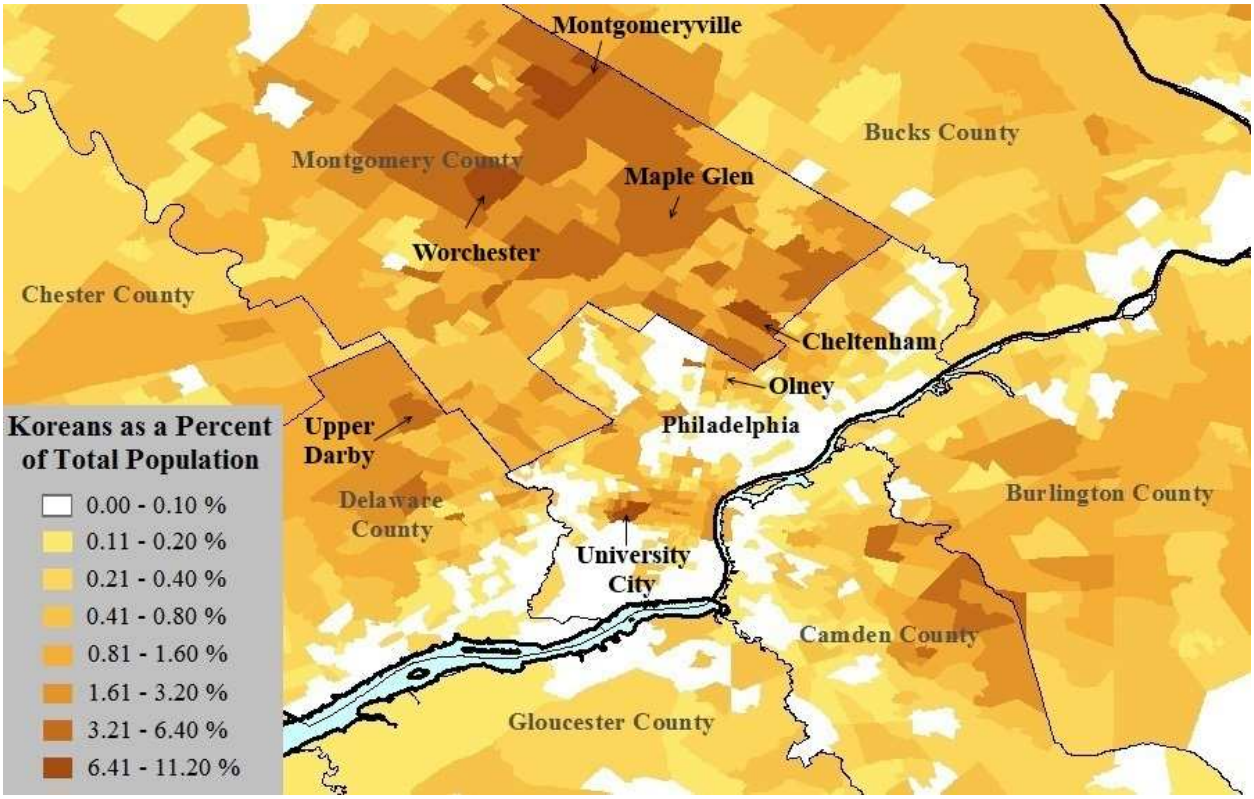
Map 63. Percentage of Population Korean in the Philadelphia Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.



Map 64. Percentage of Population Korean in the Philadelphia Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.

County	Income	
	1989	1999
Bucks, PA	$9,723	$19,979
Burlington, NJ	$9,116	$16,724
Camden, NJ	$14,463	$16,031
Chester, PA	$10,914	$21,310
Delaware, PA	$13,172	$15,640
Gloucester, NJ	$8,900	$12,453
Montgomery, PA	$13,159	$18,405
Philadelphia, PA	$8,562	$11,988
Total United States	**$11,178**	**$18,027**

Table 46. Average Korean Incomes Per Capita in the Philadelphia Metropolitan Counties, 1989 and 1999. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF4b, NPB95A and 2000_SF4, NPCT130A.



Map 65. Percentage of Population Korean in the Philadelphia Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

businesses can now be found in the city and inner suburbs. Even the town of Upper Darby is now more of a multicultural business district than a Korean enclave (Photo 34).

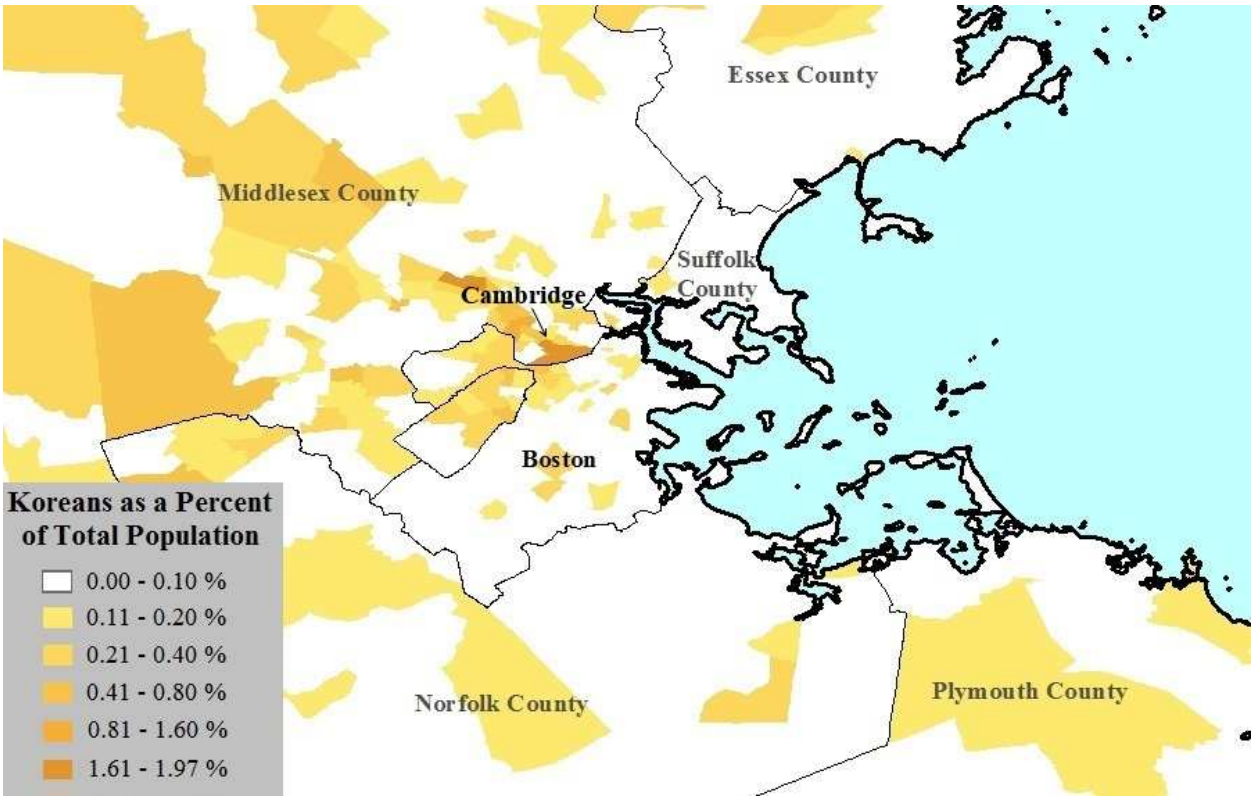
Photo 34. A Korean Private Tutoring Center and a Hispanic Business Located in a Building in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania, May 10, 2008. Source: Justin Dula, AICP (used with permission).

Boston

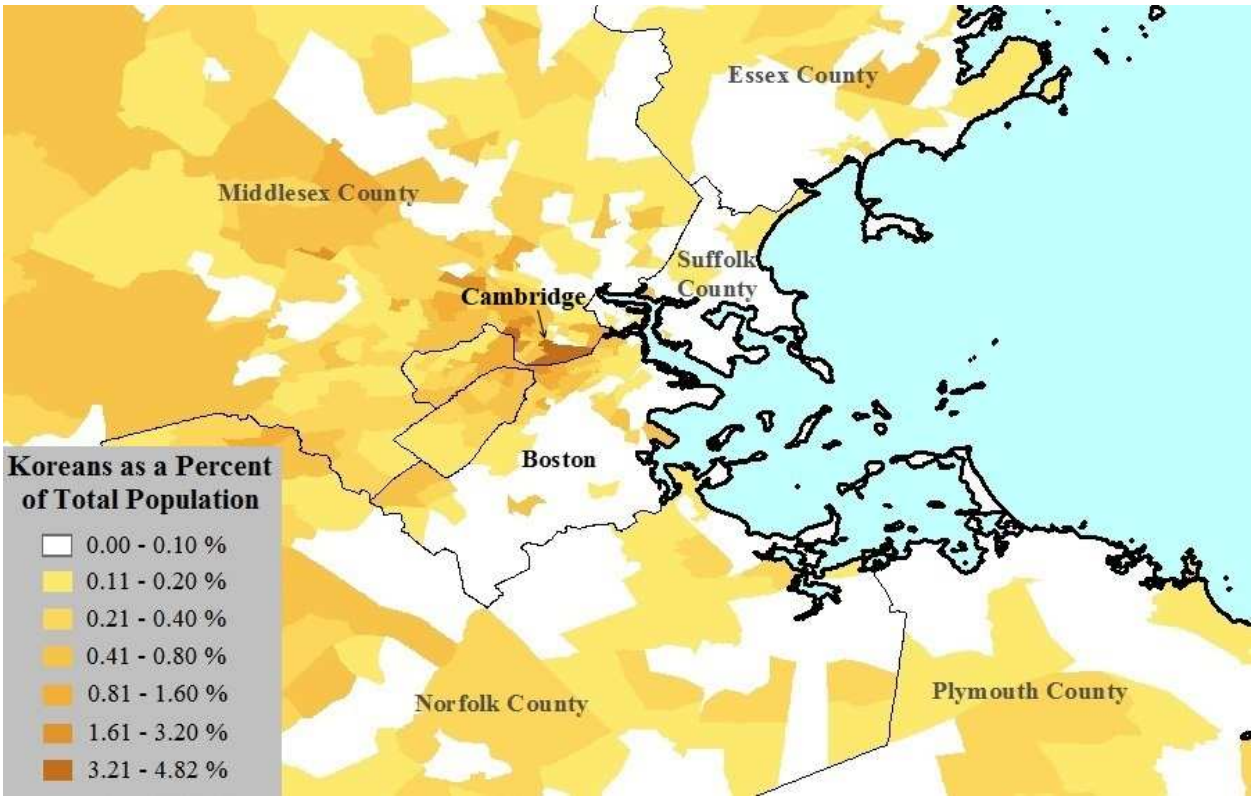
Since Boston has several of the top universities in the world and a good educational environment in general, it should be no surprise to learn that most early Korean immigrants to that city came as university students. And, similar to what happened in Philadelphia, these students contributed greatly to local ethnic organizations. In October 4, 1972, for example, about one hundred and fifty Koreans, including many university students and graduates, met in an assembly hall at MIT to form "The Korean Society of New England." Then, as immigration continued, state-level organizations emerged starting with Rhode Island in 1975 (Baek and Song 2002).

The Korean population in Boston was still small as recently as 1990 (Maps 66 and 67). Only Cambridge, the home of Harvard and MIT, had a cluster of Asian people. With universities as the focus of regional ethnic life, their educational attainments also were higher than kinsmen in other locations (Table 47). In Cambridge, the first ethnic church was established in 1978. It grew by assisting university students in their adjustment to a new environment and in 1992 the congregation purchased a new, large building (Photo 35). For three decades, this church did not belonged to any denomination, but it affiliated with the Korean Methodist Church on April 30, 2009 (*The First Korean Church in Cambridge* 2014).

The size of the Korean population in Boston increased in the 1990s and began to disperse. The Allston and Brighton neighborhoods in northwestern Boston and several towns in



Map 66. Percentage of Population Korean in the Boston Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.



Map 67. Percentage of Population Korean in the Boston Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.

	Place	No School	Middle School	High School	Bachelor's	Master's	Ph.D	Total
Population	Boston	90	176	1,015	1,730	833	218	4,062
	New York	2,386	2,950	19,793	24,707	7,807	635	58,278
	Philadelphia	356	637	4,146	5,006	1,328	280	11,753
	Washington, D. C. -Baltimore	729	1,963	11,099	12,325	2,905	521	29,542
	U. S. Total	**15,799**	**30,443**	**156,989**	**196,318**	**47,724**	**8,247**	**455,520**
Percentage	Boston	2.2%	4.3%	25.0%	42.6%	20.5%	5.4%	100.0%
	New York	4.1%	5.0%	34.0%	42.4%	13.4%	1.1%	100.0%
	Philadelphia	3.0%	5.4%	35.3%	42.6%	11.3%	2.4%	100.0%
	Washington, D. C. -Baltimore	2.5%	6.6%	37.6%	41.7%	9.8%	1.8%	100.0%
	U. S. Total	**3.5%**	**6.6%**	**34.5%**	**43.1%**	**10.5%**	**1.8%**	**100.0%**

Table 47. Educational Attainment of Koreans in Northeastern Cities, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographical Information System, 1990_STF4b, NPB44.

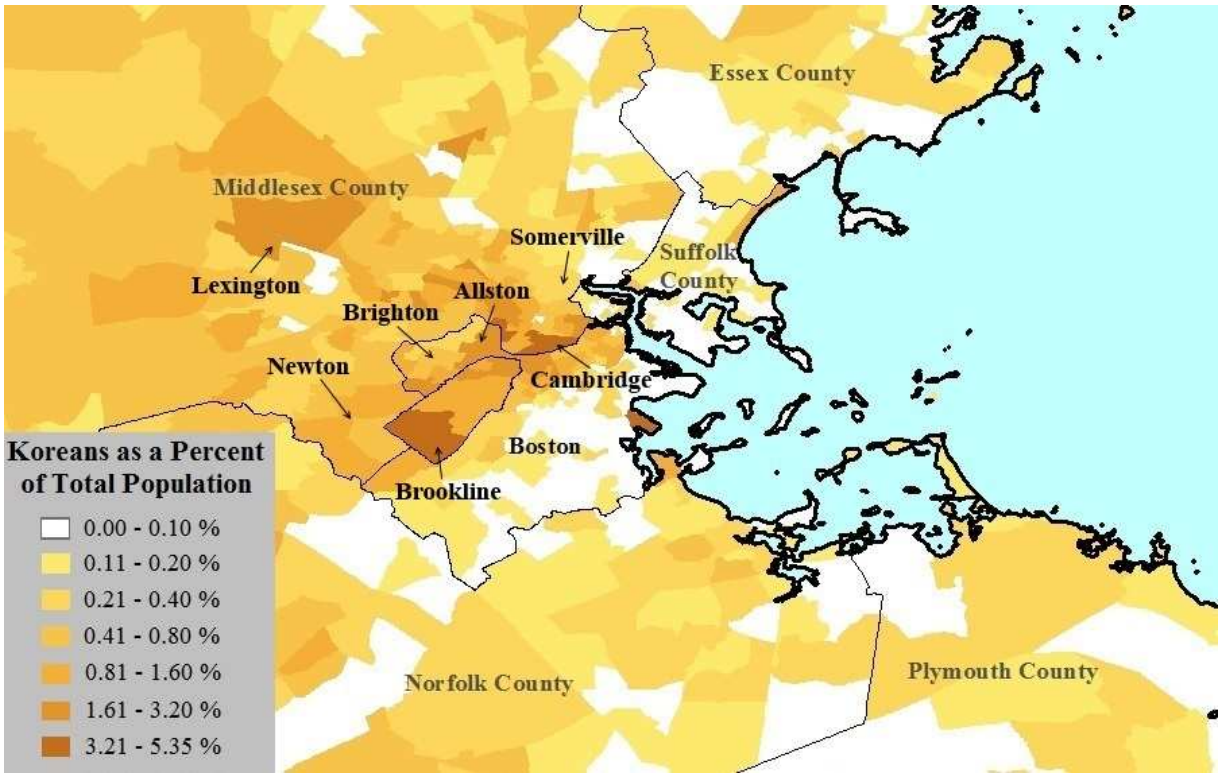
Photo 35. The First Korean Church in Cambridge in Cambridge, Massachusetts. January 4, 2011. Source: Evo Luo (used with permission).

Middlesex County emerged as new centers (Table 48). Allston-Brighton was the core by 2000, and its status was even more solid in 2010 (Maps 68 and 69). Many Korean students moved there because local housing was affordable, and ethnic businesses followed. According to Alana Olsen, director of the Allston Village Main Street development program, about ten percent of the 224 stores in Allston were Korean-owned in 2012 (*The Boston Globe*, October 28, 2012). Restaurants and bars form the most numerous business types, catering to a mixed clientele. Koreans come, of course, but also American students who like to experiment with foreign dishes such as *jokbal* (braised port foot), *snakji-somyun* (fried octopus), and rice wine. Now other businesses are coming in, including a newspaper. In 2006, Myong Sool Chang, owner of *The Boston Korean*, moved his office from Newton to Allston to be closer to sources and readers.

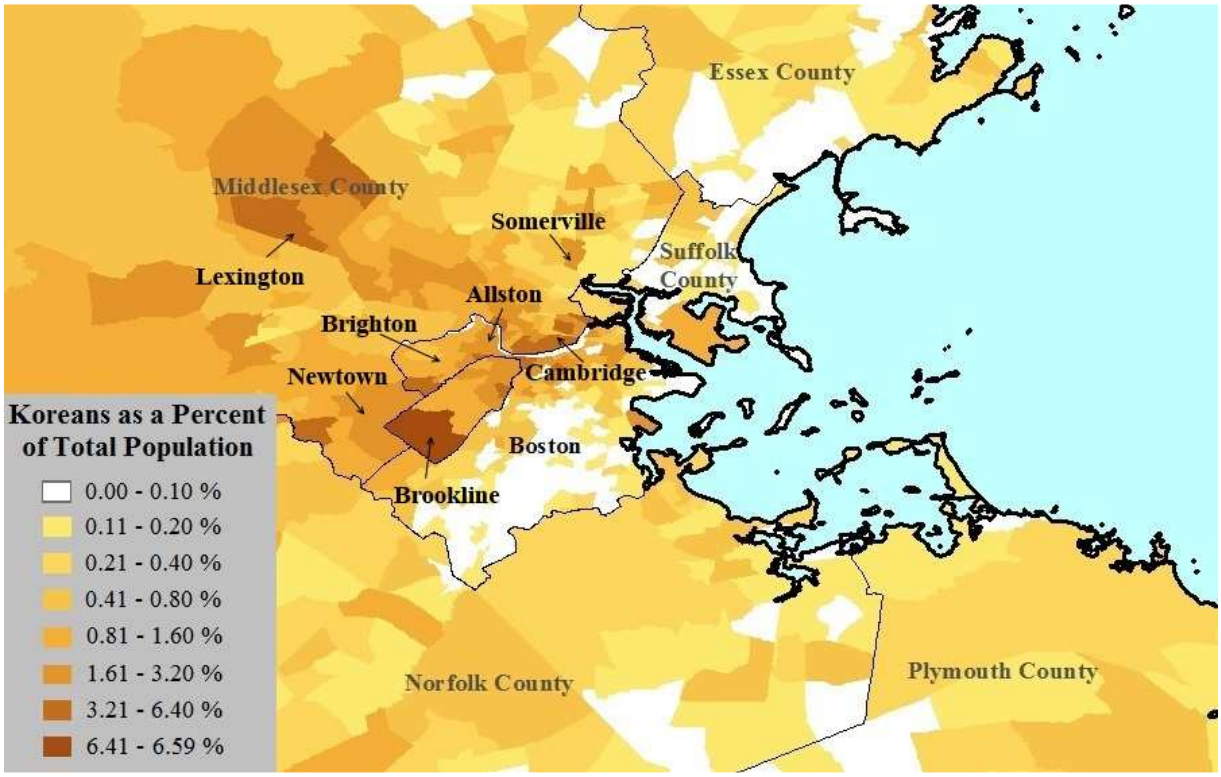
(*The Boston Globe*, October 28, 2012).

	County/Town	Year		
		1990	2000	2010
Population	Essex	1,157	1,798	2,387
	Middlesex	4,451	6,211	11,584
	Cambridge	1,302	1,993	2,566
	Lexington	212	466	1,088
	Newton	225	567	1,280
	Somerville	196	499	580
	Norfolk	1,251	2,488	3,783
	Plymouth	429	498	664
	Suffolk	1,216	2,900	4,697
	Boston	1,146	2,753	4,540
	Total Boston	**8,504**	**13,895**	**23,115**
Percentage	Essex	13.6%	12.9%	10.3%
	Middlesex	52.4%	44.7%	50.1%
	Cambridge	15.3%	14.3%	11.1%
	Lexington	2.5%	3.4%	4.7%
	Newton	2.6%	4.1%	5.5%
	Somerville	2.3%	3.6%	2.5%
	Norfolk	14.7%	17.9%	16.4%
	Plymouth	5.0%	3.6%	2.9%
	Suffolk	14.3%	20.9%	20.3%
	Boston	13.5%	19.8%	19.6%
	Total Boston	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Table 48. Korean Populations of Counties and Selected Towns in the Boston Metropolitan Region, 1990, 2000, and 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7, 2000_SF1a, NPCT005B, and 2010_SF1b, PCT7.



Map 68. Percentage of Population Korean in the Boston Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.



Map 69. Percentage of Population Korean in the Boston Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

Chapter 10

Midwestern and Southern Urban Communities

Because of an absence of historical links with Asia and being less urbanized than America's coastal regions, Midwestern and the Southern states were not popular destinations for Korean immigrants in the 1970s (Table 49). This reality is also reflected in the late development and general scarcity of direct air travel routes between South Korea and these cities by *Korean Air*, the only airline that provided direct flights through the 1990s (Table 50).

Region	City	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Midwest	Chicago	2,936	19,950	36,189	45,080	59,171
	Cleveland	537	1,380	2,053	2,446	3,464
	Detroit	961	3,972	6,571	8,347	11,930
	Kansas City	235	1,497	2,426	3,066	5,685
	Milwaukee	322	1,295	1,718	2,071	3,338
	Minneapolis-St. Paul	650	4,323	8,117	9,208	14,679
	St. Louis	534	1,795	3,080	3,848	6,076
	Total South	**6,175**	**34,212**	**60,154**	**74,066**	**104,343**
South	Atlanta	229	2,311	9,471	20,540	42,592
	Dallas	361	2,511	8,963	14,739	26,538
	Houston	413	3,428	7,200	10,071	17,484
	Memphis	71	406	994	1,541	2,404
	Miami	169	921	1,403	1,333	2,059
	New Orleans	121	569	841	1,169	1,506
	Total South	**1,364**	**10,146**	**28,872**	**49,393**	**92,583**
Total United States		**69,130**	**354,593**	**798,849**	**1,228,427**	**1,706,822**

Table 49. Korean Population Distribution in Midwestern and Southern Cities, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1, 1980_STF1, NT7, 1990_STF1, NP7, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B, and 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

Year	Admitting City	Connecting City	Note
1972	Los Angeles		
1986	New York		
1987	San Francisco	Chicago	
1992	Chicago		
1994	Chicago	Atlanta	
	San Francisco	Dallas	
1995	New York	Washington, D. C.	
1996	Newark, NJ		Service Stopped in 2003
	Boston		Service Stopped in 2001
1997	San Francisco	Denver	Service Stopped in 1999
2001	Washington, D. C.		
2002	Atlanta		
2005	Seattle		
2006	Las Vegas		
2009	Dallas		
2014	Houston		

Table 50. Historical Timeline of Korean Air's Direct Passenger Service Establishments between the U. S. and South Korea. Source: Korean Air (www.koreanair.com).

The number of Korean immigrants to major Midwestern and Southern cities was not only small, but it was also spread out within each urban area compared to distributions on the coasts. This dispersion was mostly a matter of timing, because by the 1970s when the immigrants first came, central cities were in decline and suburbs were growing. Koreans simply were following the flow. A dispersed pattern of settlement was both good and bad. Certainly, it made the process of meeting and getting help from other Korean settlers difficult during the early years. Basically, each person or family had to deal with all the issues that immigrants go through by themselves, and as a result, the learning of American customs and lifestyles was extra difficult.

Once the initial adjustments had been made, however, positive effects were apparent. The Asians could learn their new country better by not limiting social contacts to kinsmen and could acquire useful skills for survival more quickly. Indeed, 1980 census data on English-speaking abilities shows that the Koreans in Midwestern and Southern cities knew the new language better than their compatriots elsewhere (Table 51).

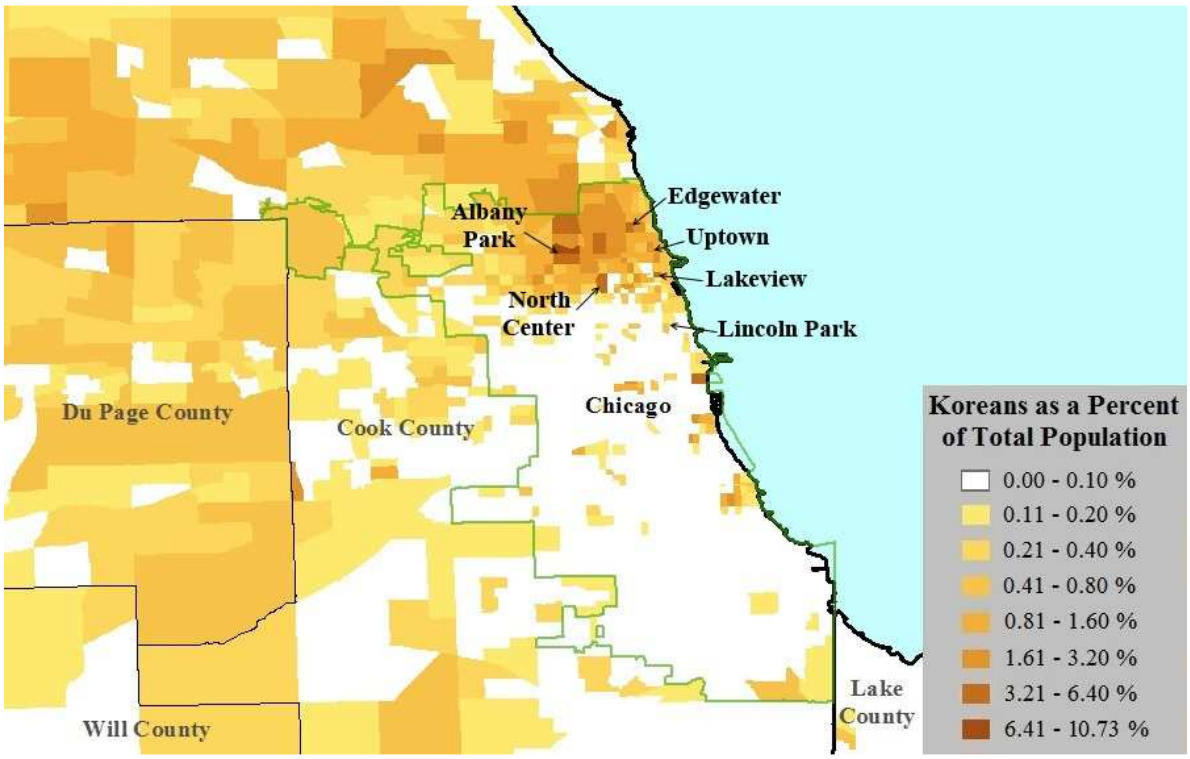
	City	Speak English Only	Speaking Korean at home				Total
			Speak English very well	Speak English Well	Speak English Not Well	Speak English Not At All	
Population	Atlanta	162	764	775	527	83	2,311
	Chicago	3,183	4,915	6,771	4,257	824	19,950
	Dallas-Fort Worth	654	792	860	622	127	3,055
	Houston	548	944	1,132	621	183	3,428
	Minneapolis-St. Paul	2,597	594	736	339	57	4,323
	Los Angeles	9,124	15,710	20,000	18,011	4,167	67,012
	New York	5,134	5,783	7,972	5,783	1,340	26,012
	Total U. S.	**88,313**	**90,157**	**99,145**	**63,955**	**13,023**	**354,593**
Percentage	Atlanta	7.0%	33.1%	33.5%	22.8%	3.6%	100.0%
	Chicago	16.0%	24.6%	34.0%	21.3%	4.1%	100.0%
	Dallas-Fort Worth	21.4%	25.9%	28.1%	20.4%	4.2%	100.0%
	Houston	16.0%	27.5%	33.0%	18.1%	5.4%	100.0%
	Minneapolis-St. Paul	60.2%	13.7%	17.0%	7.8%	1.3%	100.0%
	Los Angeles	13.6%	23.4%	29.9%	26.9%	6.2%	100.0%
	New York	19.7%	22.2%	30.7%	22.2%	5.2%	100.0%
	Total U. S.	**24.9%**	**25.4%**	**28.0%**	**18.0%**	**3.7%**	**100.0%**

Table 51. Language Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English by Koreans in Selected Cities, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF4Pa, NTPA18.

Chicago

Because of its size, Chicago was an exception to the generality that Midwestern place names were unfamiliar to Asian immigrants in the 1970s. It was the only city in the central part of the country with a significant Korean population in the 1980s and was the first (in 1987) to receive air service from Seoul (Table 50). Because Chicago's economy is large and varied, the immigrants who chose to settle there had similar mindsets with the ones who went to urban places in the West and the Northeast (Kim and Kim 2002).

Asian ethnic enclaves developed slowly in Chicago, but by 1980 Korean concentrations were obvious on the city's north side (Map 70). The initial center, circa 1971, was at Lakeview, a former focus for Irish and German families. As the Euro-Americans left, the town continuously served other, more recent immigrants including a small number of Koreans. Local

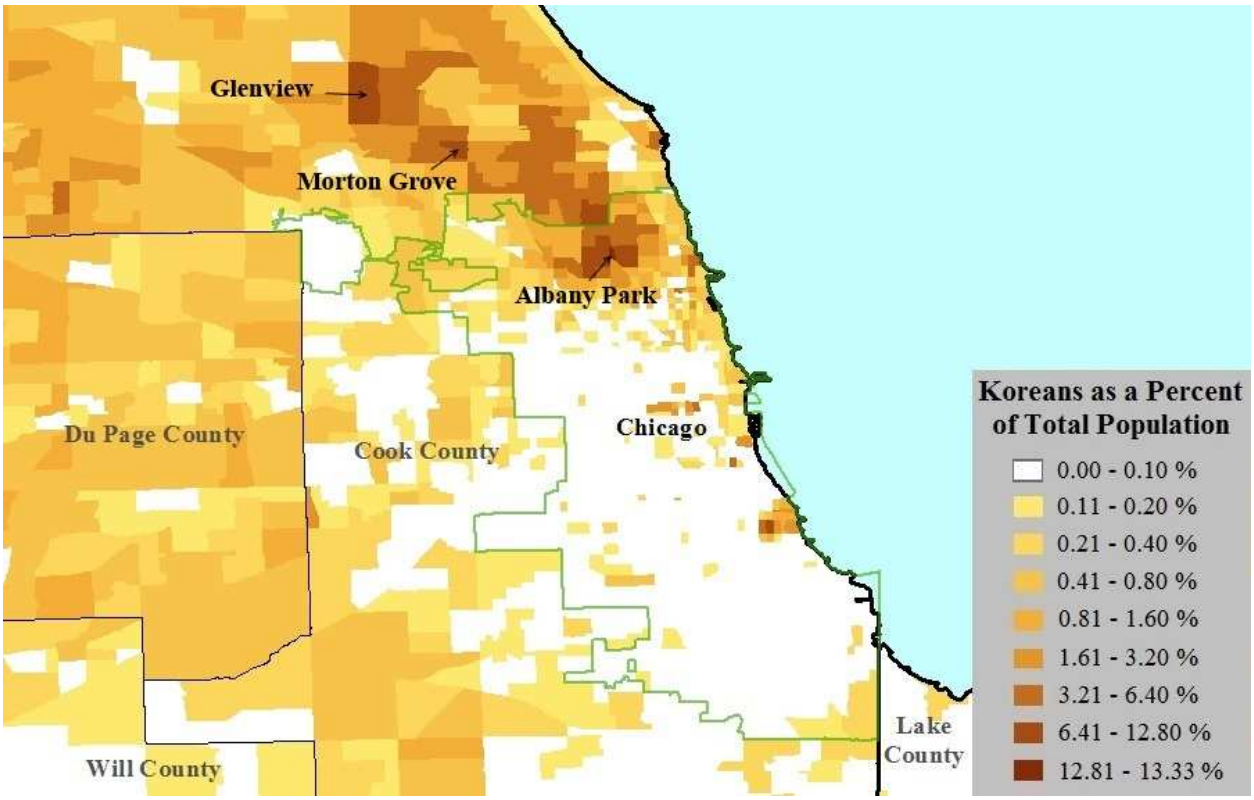


Map 70. Percentage of Population Korean in the Chicago Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.

real estate was relatively inexpensive, and so Korean newcomers could afford to rent at least single rooms and old apartments. The Lakeview Koreans never had sizeable numbers and did not form a significant social group of their own. Instead, they worked under American employers, many at several hospitals in Lincoln Park, just south of Lakeview. A few years later, Korean populations grew in several communities near and similar to Lakeview: Albany Park, Lincoln Square, Uptown, and Edgewater (Kim 1991).

The largest number of Koreans chose Albany Park as their residence during the 1980s (Map 70). Rents there were again relatively inexpensive, as the previous Jewish homeowners were in the process of moving elsewhere. The town's vacancy rate was as high as thirty percent in 1975, but as Koreans and various Latin American groups moved in, this rate went down and then stabilized at around three percent by 1990 (*The Korea Times*, May 23, 1991). Although many of the new Koreans worked at hospitals, others entered the local retail trade. Eight ethnically-owned businesses operated in 1977. In 1974, for example, Kook Yum Hyun had opened one of the Chicago area's first Korean grocery stores on Lawrence Avenue, the town's main road. Hyun was a friendly man, and as local Koreans began to trade with him, rapport developed, and a sort of ethnic community was built from there. The number of Korean-owned businesses increased continuously from that point until it reached two hundred and fifty in 1990 (Map 71 and *The Korea Times*, May 23, 1991).

Younger generations in Albany Park saw less reason than their elders to live in and maintain a strong ethnic community. Many such people moved out to northside suburbs in search of better homes and schools, leaving most of Albany Park's ethnic business to be operated by people over fifty. New centers of Korean population arose in Glenview and Morton Grove, but neither place contained many ethnic businesses (Map 71 and Table 52).



Map 71. Percentage of Population Korean in the Chicago Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.

	Location	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Population	Chicago City	1,852	10,107	13,863	13,730	13,418
	Suburb	1,084	9,843	22,326	31,350	45,753
	Total Chicago	2,936	19,950	36,189	45,080	59,171
Percentage	Chicago City	63.1%	50.7%	38.3%	30.5%	22.7%
	Suburb	36.9%	49.3%	61.7%	69.5%	77.3%
	Total Chicago	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

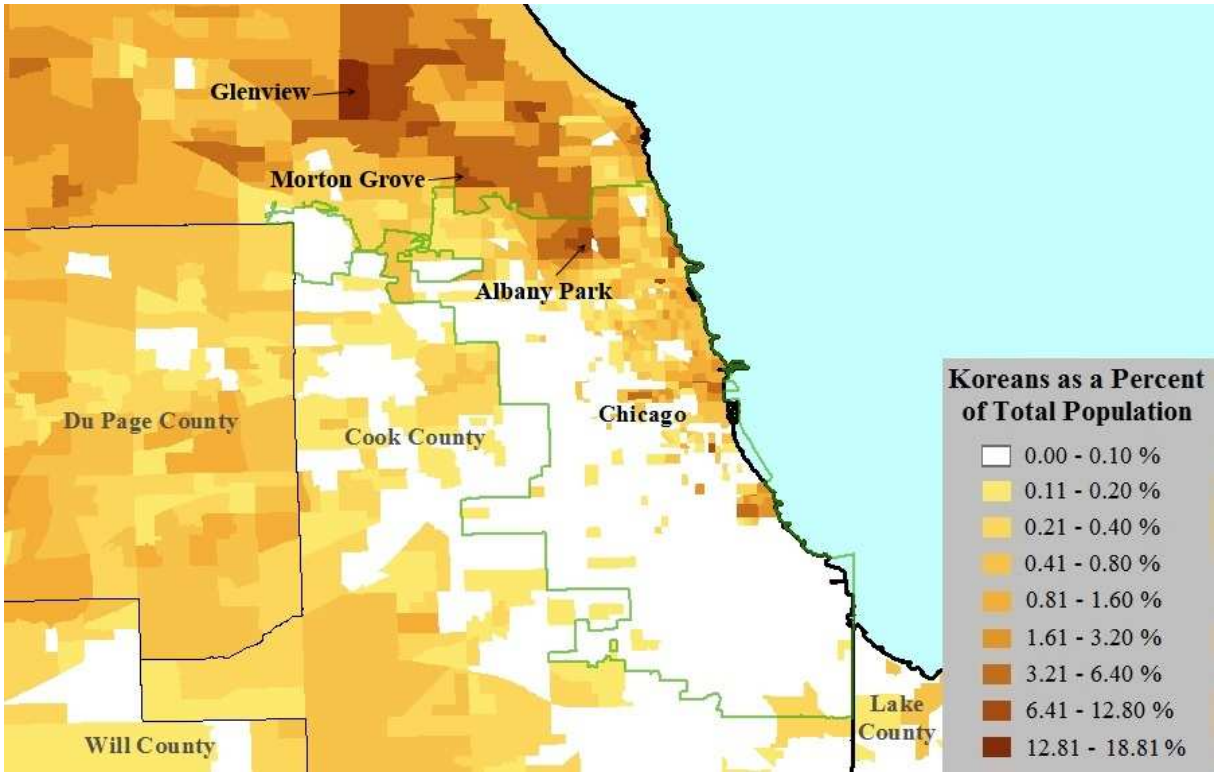
Table 52. Korean Population in Chicago and its Suburbs, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1, 1980_STF1, NT7, 1990_STF1, NP7, 2000_SF1a, NPCT005B, and 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

Only a small number of Koreans lived on Chicago's south side, with or near the city's large African-American population. The ones who did so often had tough lives. Samuel S. Han was raised there in an African-American neighborhood by a single mother. When the two of them arrived in 1980s, they did not know even simple English words. His mother had trouble finding and keeping jobs. She was robbed several times and called ethnic slurs, but found nobody willing to help her. The Han experience was not unusual, and as word spread, most Koreans tried to avoid living in this part of Chicago if they possibly could. Oddly, however, Samuel and his mother lived in the area for almost three decades (Han, March 13, 2013).

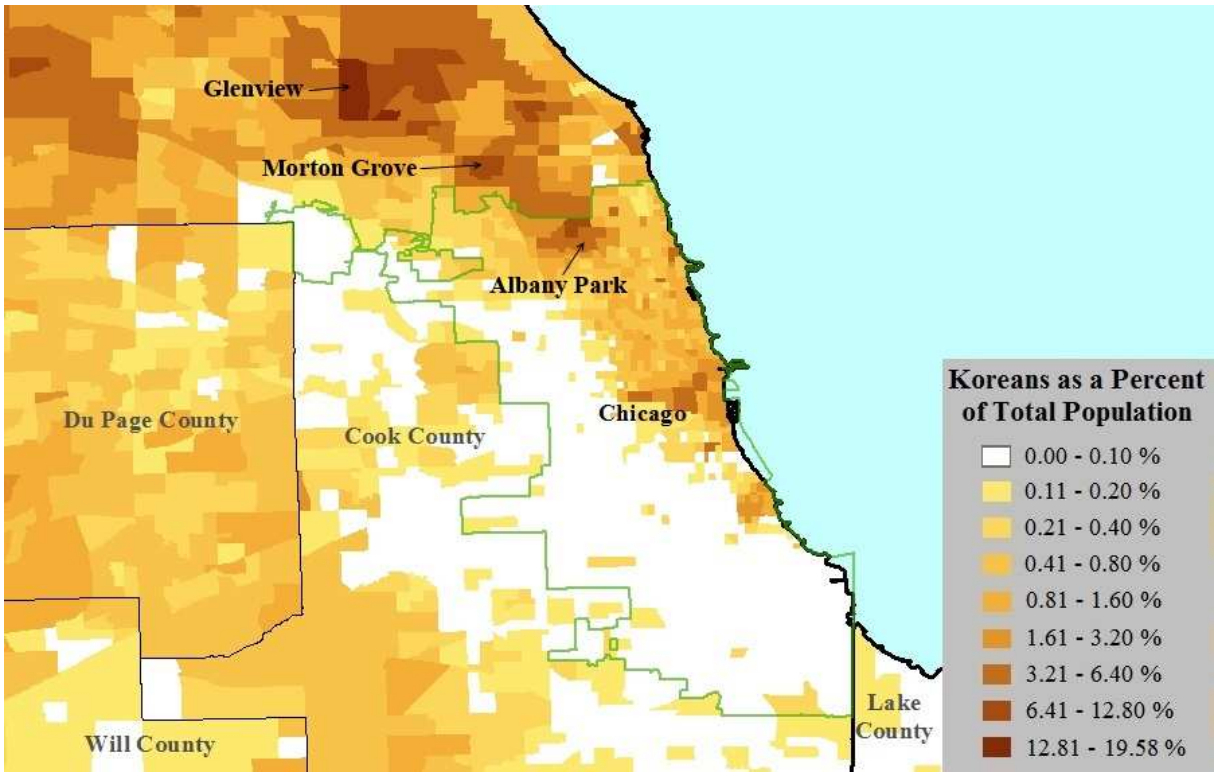
In the early 1990s, Albany Park experienced ethnic strife when the local Korean merchants lobbied city officials to label the main street of the town, Lawrence Avenue, as "honorary Seoul Drive" (Photo 36). This plan upset long-time residents, but when officials granted approval anyway, brown and white street signs were installed on April 28, 1993. Intense reaction caused these signs to come down the next morning, but two weeks later they went back up, this time permanently (*The Chicago Tribune*, May 24, 1993). A majority of the Korean business owners in Albany Park thought the problem was because neighbors were jealous of their success. A few intellectuals saw the issue differently. Three years before, in fact, Kwang Dong Jo, a local newspaper editor, had suggested that the Koreans should work on improving relationships with the others in the town instead of courting politicians to curry short-term economic advantages. Jo explained that "Koreans want to be involved in the white mainstream, so they're very nice to rich, powerful people, but they're very arrogant to poor Hispanics and blacks. We should invest in the long term. We should invest our basic honesty, kindness. Even if we do not get any rewards, our second generation will" (*The Korea Times*, November 7, 1990).

Photo 36. Seoul Drive Street Sign on W. Lawrence Avenue in Albany Park, Illinois, February 6, 2012. Source: Collin Hill (used with permission).

During the 1990s, the status of Chicago proper decline sharply within the Korean-American society compared the city's northern suburbs (Maps 72 and 73). Korean businesses began to disappear along with the younger people. In recent years, the commercial district of Albany Park became multiethnic (Photo 37). Although Korean-owned businesses remain, they now are joined by many Central and South American ones.



Map 72. Percentage of Population Korean in the Chicago Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 2000.
Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.



Map 73. Percentage of Population Korean in the Chicago Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 2010.
Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

Photo 37. Korean and Spanish Signs in Albany Park, Illinois, March 6, 2009. Source: Delia Seeberg (used with permission).

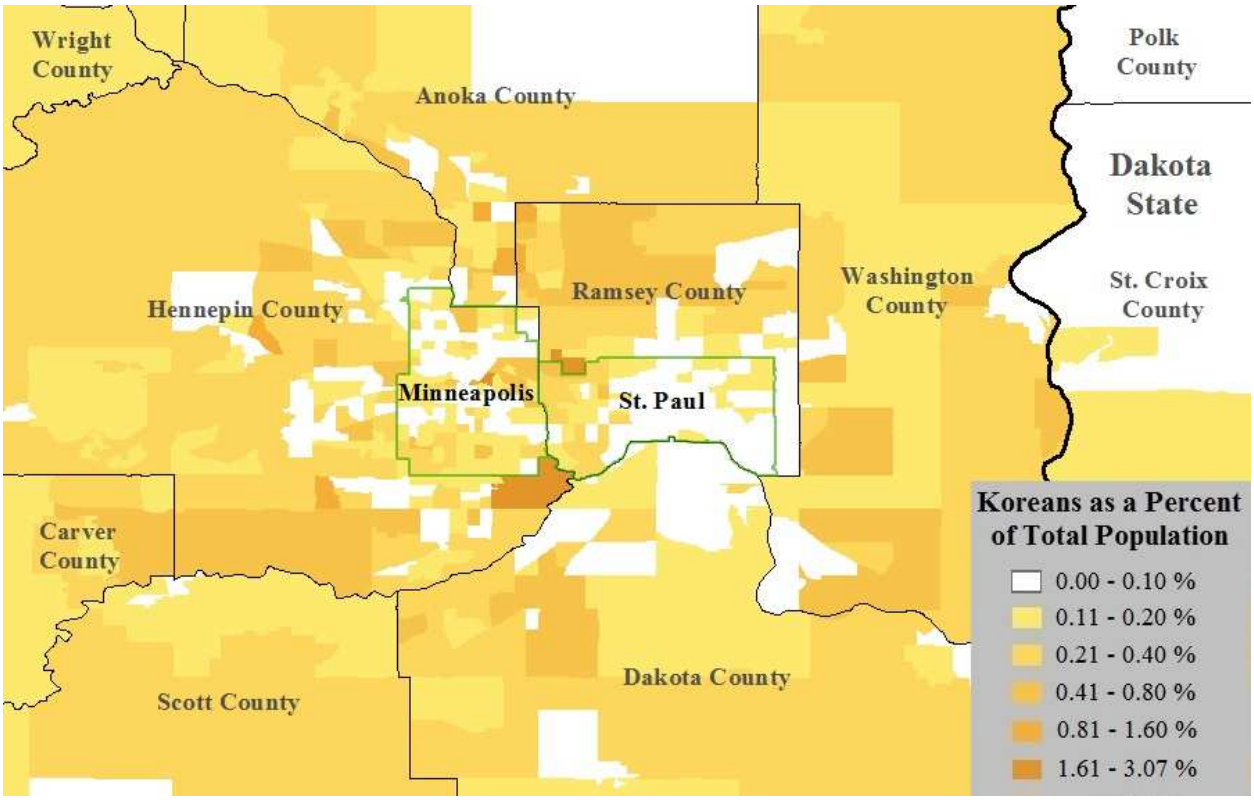
Minneapolis-St. Paul

Since 1965, the Twin Cities have ranked second only to Chicago as a center of Korean immigration to the Midwest. This is surprising at first glance, because several other regional cities have larger total populations and economies. Such reasoning suggests that the growth here might be related to a less obvious reason, and indeed it is. The majority of Korean immigrants to Minneapolis and St. Paul came as adoptees (Choy 2013, 177) are result of work by the Children's Home Society of Minnesota and other local adoption agencies that helped some thirteen and fifteen thousand Korean children find new homes in the Twin Cities region (Kim

2010, 21-22). A population chart demonstrates the pattern well (Table 53). More than a third of the city's Korean population in 1990 was under the age of ten, and more than two-thirds was under twenty. Moreover, since the American homes of these adopted children were and are spread widely throughout the metropolitan region, the Korean population traditionally has been similarly dispersed. This pattern held true through 1990, but of course has changed somewhat in recent years as the adoptees have grown up (Map 74).

	City	0-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60+	Total
Population	Atlanta	1,746	1,563	1,764	1,897	1,322	712	467	9,471
	Chicago	6,574	6,474	5,649	5,954	5,623	3,158	2,757	36,189
	Los Angeles	29,296	29,046	30,857	33,791	26,491	16,257	15,612	181,350
	New York	14,646	13,442	16,361	18,784	13,846	7,753	5,873	90,705
	Minneapolis -St. Paul	3,053	2,447	1,015	736	468	220	178	8,117
	Total U. S.	**154,544**	**139,890**	**138,893**	**145,425**	**109,613**	**61,509**	**48,975**	**798,849**
Percentage	Atlanta	18.4%	16.5%	18.6%	20.0%	14.0%	7.5%	5.0%	100.0%
	Chicago	18.2%	17.9%	15.6%	16.5%	15.5%	8.7%	7.6%	100.0%
	Los Angeles	16.2%	16.0%	17.0%	18.6%	14.6%	9.0%	8.6%	100.0%
	New York	16.1%	14.8%	18.0%	20.7%	15.3%	8.5%	6.6%	100.0%
	Minneapolis -St. Paul	37.6%	30.1%	12.5%	9.1%	5.8%	2.7%	2.2%	100.0%
	Total U. S.	**19.3%**	**17.5%**	**17.4%**	**18.2%**	**13.7%**	**7.7%**	**6.2%**	**100.0%**

Table 53. Age Distributions of Koreans in Selected Cities, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF2b, NPB5.



Map 74. Percentage of Population Korean in the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.

Although Korean adoptees physically look like average Koreans, they obviously have a different culture. Being raised in the United States, they acquired American value systems and, at the same time, did not have much knowledge about their Korean background. In 1976, Carrie Min Hall, at four years of age, was adopted by a Scandinavian-American family in the Twin Cities. She later learned that she had been abandoned at a police station when she was two, and assumed to be deaf and mute. She lived at a children's hospital for a while and then at an orphanage, before being adopted by her American parents. The only other Korean she knew was her sister, who was also adopted but from a different Korean family. Carrie and her sister grew up acquiring Scandinavian tastes, American customs, and a Christian faith. This background probably contributed as well to her decision to marry an Irish man. Only in 2008, when she was

thirty-six, did she visit Korea for the first time (Hall 2012).

Despite their obvious social isolation, adopted children could experience and learn something about Korean culture through special communities created by their American parents. In July 1977, the Korean Culture Camp of Minnesota was established. It meets every year during the first week of August at Minnehaha Academy in Minneapolis. About three hundred children co on average, and the number peaked at five hundred during the mid-1990s. Parents could attend the camps along with their children and learn about Asian culture at the same time (Photo 38). The subjects included the Korean language, history, songs, dance, and the martial art *taekwondo* (Photos 39 and 40). Cooking and eating Korean dishes such as *kimchi* and *bulgogi* (grilled marinated beef) were popular, too. Later, when the original campers grew up and started their own families, some of them also sent their children to the camp (*Korean Culture Camp of Minnesota* 2014).

Photo 38. Snack Time at the Korean Culture Camp of Minnesota, August 2, 2012. Source: Korean Culture of Minnesota (used with permission).

Photo 39. Children Learning a Traditional Dance at the Korean Culture Camp of Minnesota, August 2, 2012. Source: Korean Culture of Minnesota (used with permission).

Photo 40. Children in a Taekwondo Class at the Korean Culture Camp of Minnesota, August 2, 2012. Source: Korean Culture of Minnesota (used with permission).

Most of the American parents of the adopted children made good efforts with cultural education. Anna Soo-Yeong Boyd's story is typical. She came to live with a Minneapolis family in 1990 and learned she was adopted only when her parents read her a book called *When You Were Born in Korea*. Her parents always made her feel comfortable with being adopted. She believed that she came to the U. S. for a potentially good reason and felt lucky to have freedom and to grow up in a happy family. She also felt no shame about being Korean American. When she was a teen, she joined a Korean traditional dance group where local adoptees learned dances on weekends and performed them for their parents. In this way (and counter to some predictions by critics) Anna and her Korean Americans friends learned to love the Korean culture. She has plans to visit the country in the future, and in preparation, has studied the Korean language (Boyd, April 8, 2011).

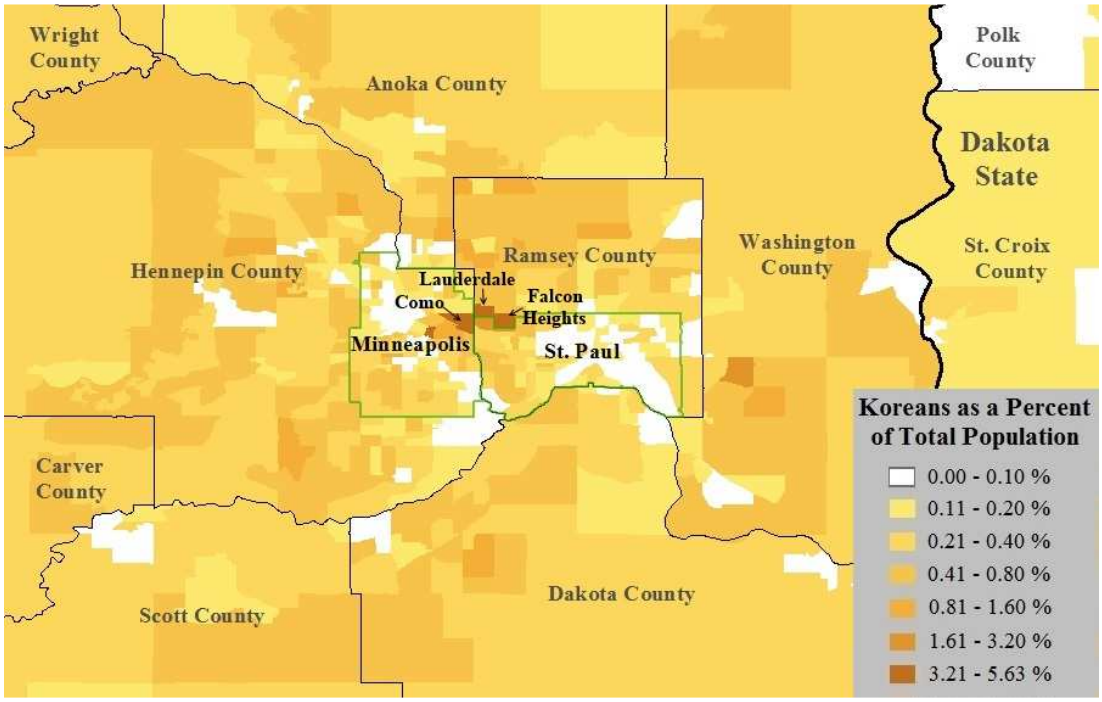
A few of the Twin Cities adoptees were not as lucky as Anna. Byung Hoon Chung came to the U. S. in 1980 when he was seven months old and was adopted by a Polish-American family in suburban Minneapolis. He was one of three Korean adoptees in his class at elementary school and experienced some racist behavior. During high school, he started to run with a troubled crowd, dealing and using drugs so as to appear tough. Eventually, at age nineteen, he went to prison where he faced racism again. The problem was more serious there, but he survived and changed his ways. He married, fathered two girls, and now works in the corporate world (Chung, January 21, 2011).

Because of the high number of Korean adoptees in the Twin Cities, more than two-thirds of the Korean population there was foreign born in 2000, but with U. S. citizenships, the highest such percentage in the country (Table 54). Still, another fifth of the Koreans in Minneapolis and St. Paul came as adults just like they did to all other major cities in the country. Their spatial

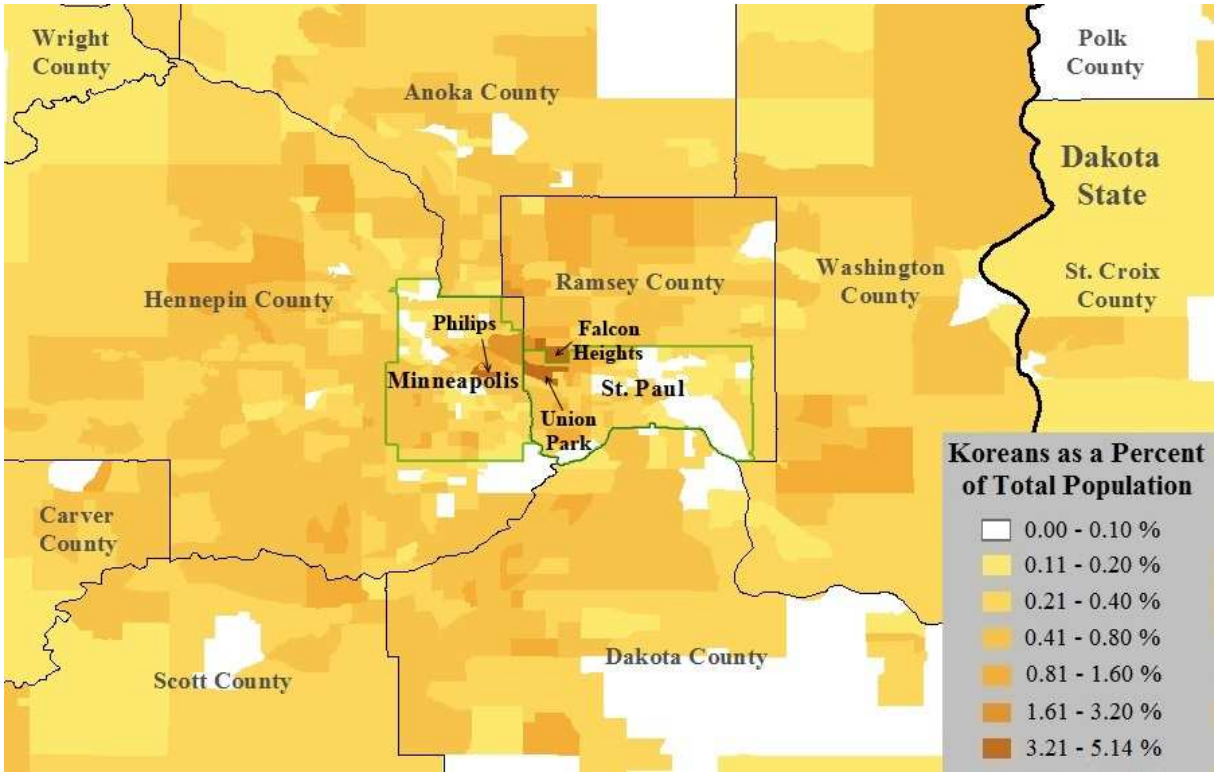
behavior was similar to that seen in previous chapters: a concentration in sites seen to have economic potential. The rise of a Korean community in the northern part of the Twin Cities between 1990 and 2010 was a result of this group of immigrants and not the adoptee population (Maps 75, 76, and 77).

	City	U. S. Citizen		Foreigner	Total
		Native	Foreign Born		
Population	Atlanta	4,201	6,237	10,102	20,540
	Chicago	9,702	20,155	15,223	45,080
	Los Angeles	51,861	87,826	102,236	241,923
	New York	27,421	35,861	65,735	129,017
	Minneapolis-St. Paul	978	6,502	1,728	9,208
	Total U. S.	**370,663**	**439,279**	**418,485**	**1,228,427**
Percentage	Atlanta	20.4%	30.4%	49.2%	100.0%
	Chicago	21.5%	44.7%	33.8%	100.0%
	Los Angeles	21.4%	36.3%	42.3%	100.0%
	New York	21.3%	27.8%	50.9%	100.0%
	Minneapolis-St. Paul	10.6%	70.6%	18.8%	100.0%
	Total U. S.	**30.2%**	**35.7%**	**34.1%**	**100.0%**

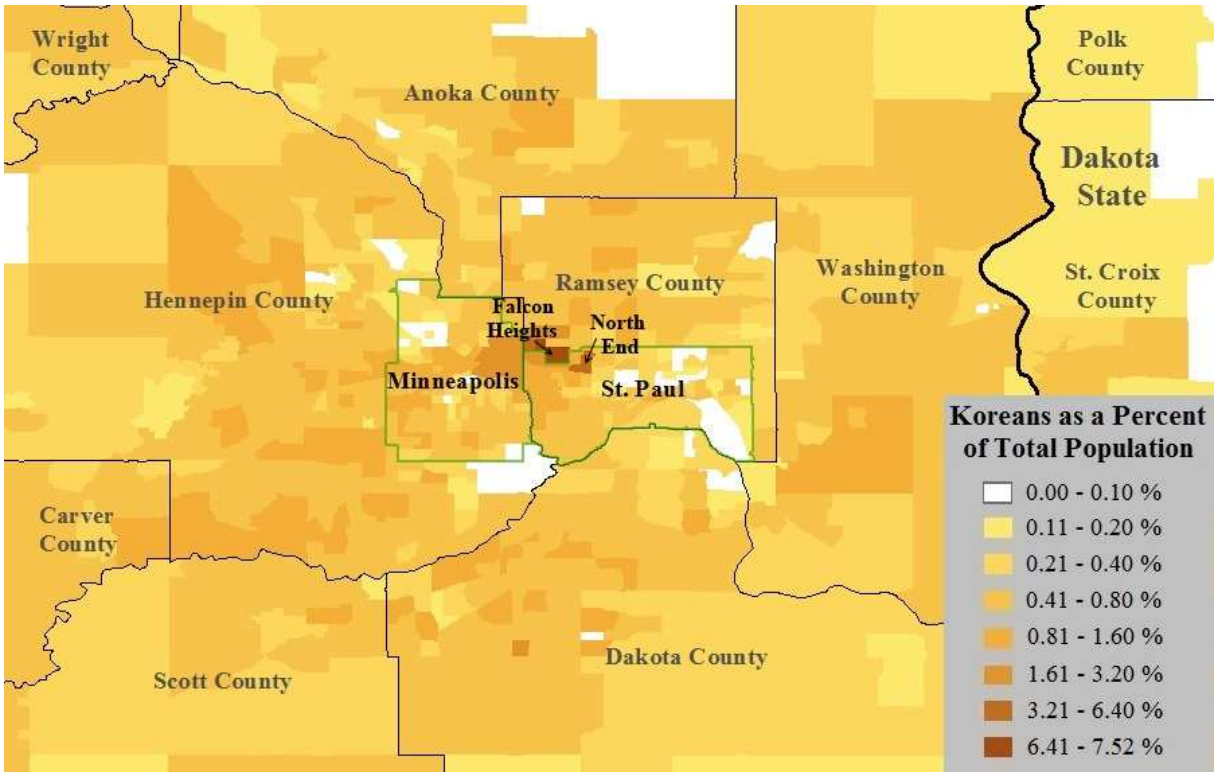
Table 54. Citizenship Status and Nativity of Koreans in Selected Cities, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF4, NPCT046B.



Map 75. Percentage of Population Korean in the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.



Map 76. Percentage of Population Korean in the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.

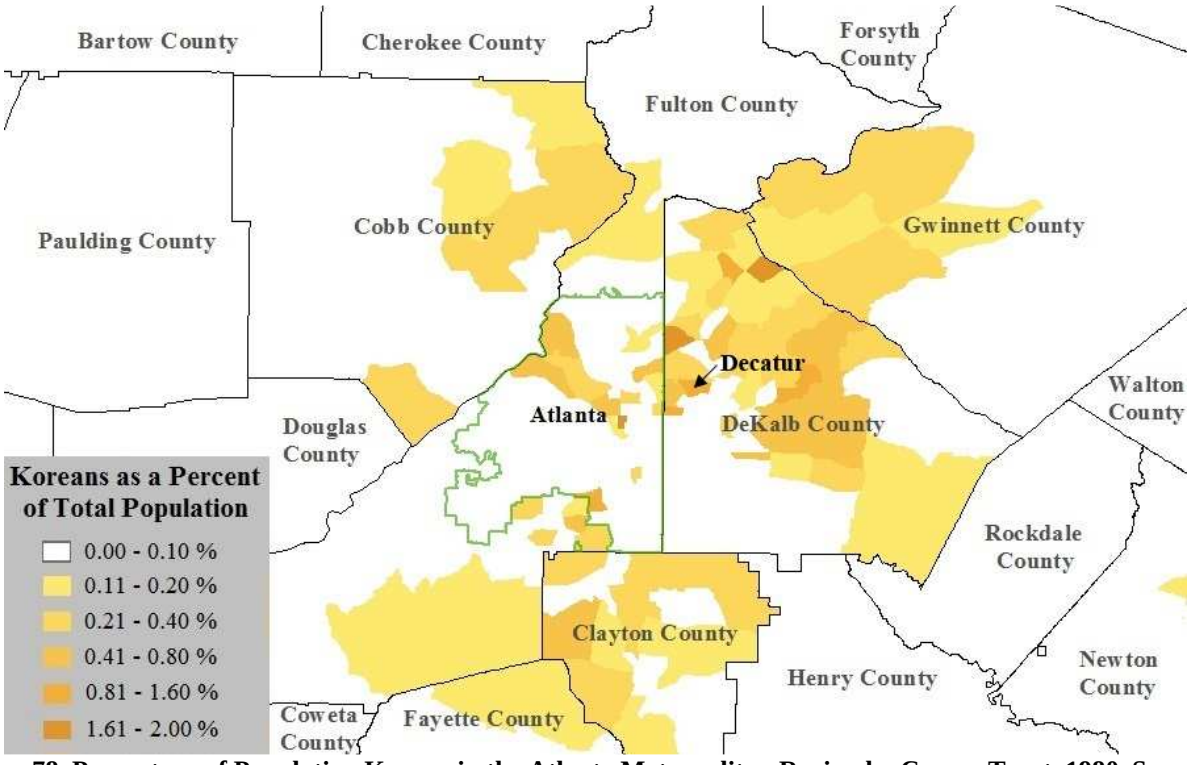


Map 77. Percentage of Population Korean in the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

Atlanta

While Chicago and the Twin Cities each had gained substantial Korean populations by 1980, no city in the South had more than 3,500 Korean residents at that time (Table 49). Just as immigration to the Midwest lagged a decade behind that on the two coasts, so did the South lag ten years behind the Midwest. When Koreans did come to the South, however, it is no surprise that they favored the region's three largest cities: Atlanta, Dallas, and Houston.

Atlanta was the single most popular destination (Map 78). About two thousand Koreans lived there in the early 1980s, most of them in the city proper (Table 55). Hannah Kang's parents, for example, settled in Decatur, a predominately African-American neighborhood just east from Atlanta. Hannah was born there and grew up with the majority of her friends being African Americans. At home, her parents taught her Korean morals, discipline, culture, and diet.



Map 78. Percentage of Population Korean in the Atlanta Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.

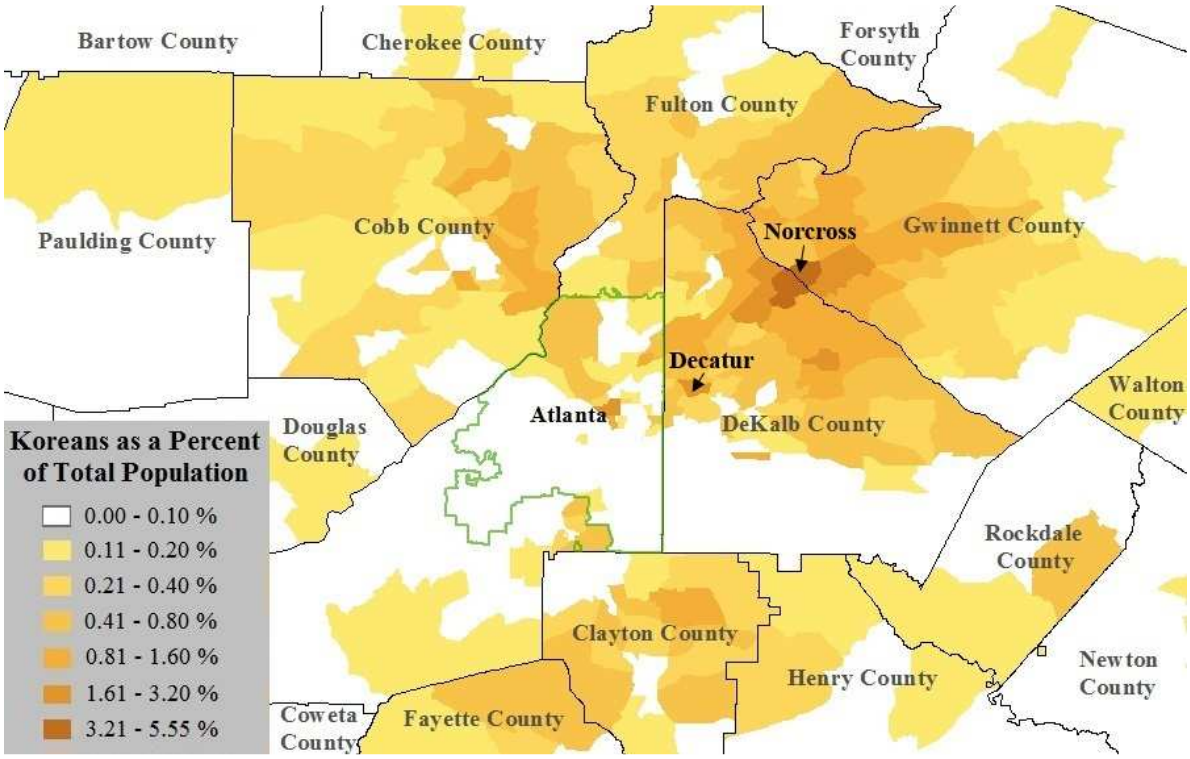
	City	Year of Entry for Foreign Born								Native	Total
		Pre 1964	1965-1969	1970-1974	1975-1979	1980-1984	1985-1989	1990-1994	1995-2000	Total		
Population	Atlanta City	5	20	40	98	67	26	28	293	577	266	843
	Duluth	9	0	0	32	88	197	140	76	542	146	688
	Dunwoody	0	5	72	27	65	28	28	203	428	27	455
	Roswell	0	0	77	57	205	85	36	229	689	209	898
	Total Atlanta	**68**	**209**	**1,131**	**1,794**	**2,668**	**3,145**	**2,712**	**4,612**	**16,339**	**5,174**	**21,513**
Percentage	Atlanta City	0.6%	2.4%	4.7%	11.6%	7.9%	3.1%	3.3%	34.8%	68.4%	31.6%	100.0%
	Duluth	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	4.7%	12.8%	28.6%	20.4%	11.0%	78.8%	21.2%	100.0%
	Dunwoody	0.0%	1.1%	15.8%	5.9%	14.3%	6.2%	6.2%	44.6%	94.1%	5.9%	100.0%
	Roswell	0.0%	0.0%	8.6%	6.3%	22.8%	9.5%	4.0%	25.5%	76.7%	23.3%	100.0%
	Total Atlanta	**0.3%**	**1.0%**	**5.3%**	**8.3%**	**12.4%**	**14.6%**	**12.6%**	**21.4%**	**75.9%**	**24.1%**	**100.0%**

Table 55. Years of Entry for the Foreign-Born Korean Population in the Atlanta Metropolitan Region, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B and 2000_SF4, NPCT045C.

She confessed, though, that she did not like helping her mother make ethnic dishes and learning Korean dances. Also, she often felt embarrassed when she went out because of her mother's broken English and loud voice. While Hannah thought Korean values were fine, she loved R&B and hip hop music much more. In fact, she felt that she was more like her African-American friends than the few other Koreans she met. Probably because of this upbringing, Hannah became the general manager of Grand Hustle, a African-American music recording company (Kang, December 20, 2010).

As time went on, more of the Asian immigrants to Atlanta settled in towns farther from the city center. By 1990, suburbanization was common (Map 79). At the same time, the total

number of Korean immigrants to the city increased tremendously, in part because of the growing Rust Belt image of industrial cities in the Great Lakes region (Crandall 1993) when compared to the positive Sun Belt perception of the South (Schulman 1991, 175). In addition, Atlanta received extra attention from developing world when it was chosen to host the Summer Olympics of 1996 (Lee 2002).

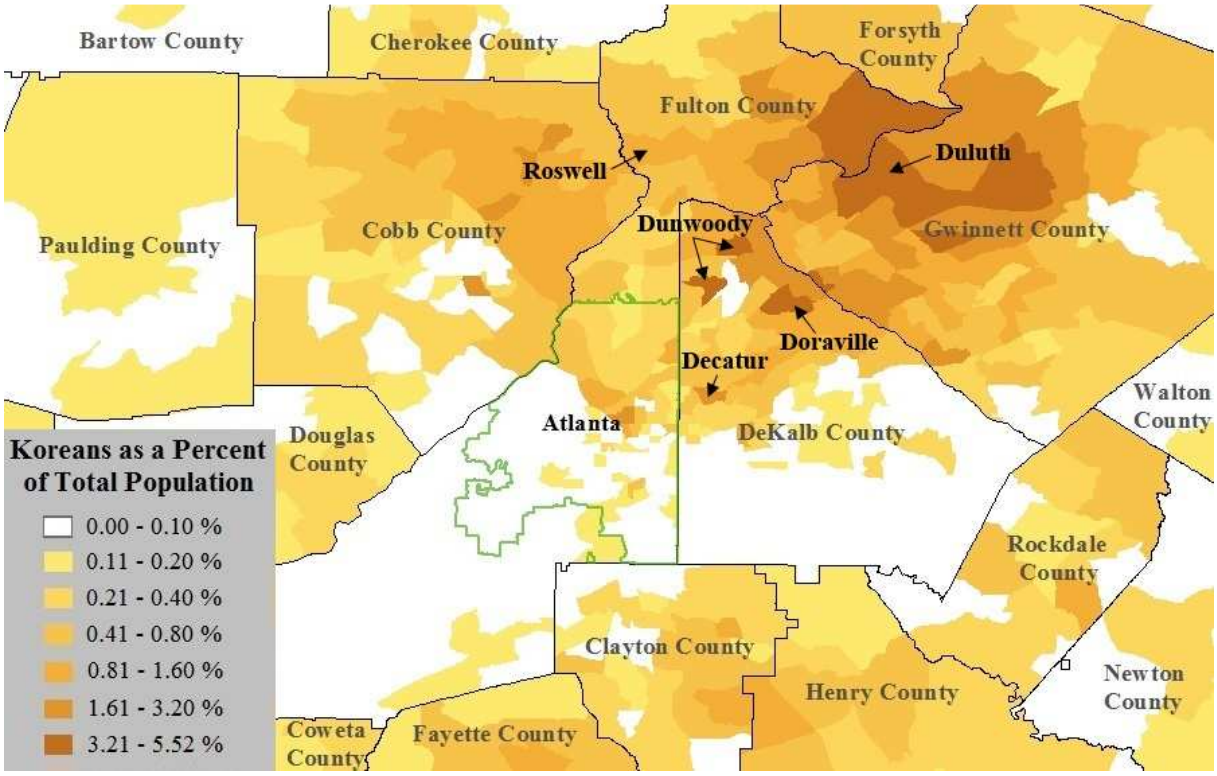


Map 79. Percentage of Population Korean in the Atlanta Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.

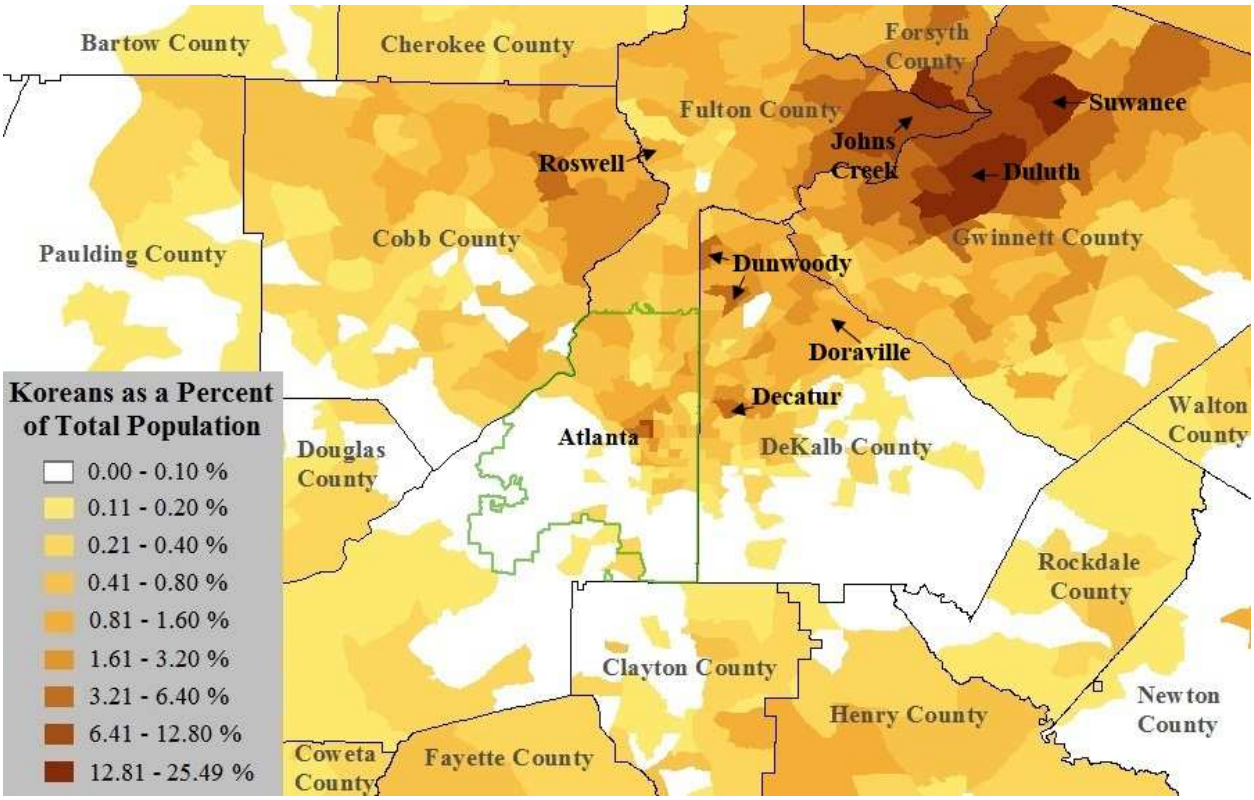
The Olympics held special meaning for South Koreans back then, because they recently had felt great pride by hosting the 1988 Olympics themselves, and using this event to showcase their country's economic ascendency since the poverty of the Korean War. Atlanta received an additional boost as an immigrant destination in 1992 when the image of Los Angeles, the traditional number one U. S. entry point, was dangerously tarnished for Asians because of the Koreatown riots. Atlanta seemed peaceful and exciting in contrast. Korean Air began to provide

flight service to Atlanta in October 1994 and this, too, helped to fuel a boom (Tables 49, 50; Lee 2002).

Within Atlanta itself, the Olympics brought attention back to the central area, at least for a short time (Table 55). In 2000, many Koreans settled in Atlanta and nearby towns such as Doraville and Roswell in DeKalb County and Dunwoody in northern part of Fulton County (Maps 80, 81). Young Kyo Shinn, who had been the first Korean to open a grocery store in Buckhead district of Atlanta in 1972, struggled for more than a decade to repay his debts after he relocated to a 100,000-square-foot space in Decatur in 1983. Mr. Shinn was ashamed and said he failed because he did not understand the sensitivities of mainstream Americans to packaging and presentation. The following year, he restarted with $10,000 worth of foods bought on credit and a 9,000 square-feet store in Doraville, but still did not make much progress. Then, however,



Map 80. Percentage of Population Korean in the Atlanta Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.



Map 81. Percentage of Population Korean in the Atlanta Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

when the Olympics brought in waves of new people, especially from Latin America, the Shinns contacted with California-based distributors to ship in Hispanic food products that were not available in Atlanta before. His business has boomed since then (*The Wall Street Journal*, August 23, 2000).

Recent population trends for Atlanta Koreans are similar those seen in other cities. However, the growing popularity there of Korean fusion foods is unique. While the American South has always been famous for its delicious dishes, the mixture of Southern and Korean tastes is a recent phenomenon. It was the result of a few entrepreneurs. Tomas Lee, for example, has operated a Korean Taco restaurant in midtown Atlanta since the early 2000s (*TaKorea* 2014 and Photo 41). His tacos made with Korean ingredients sold at a decent pace from the start, but

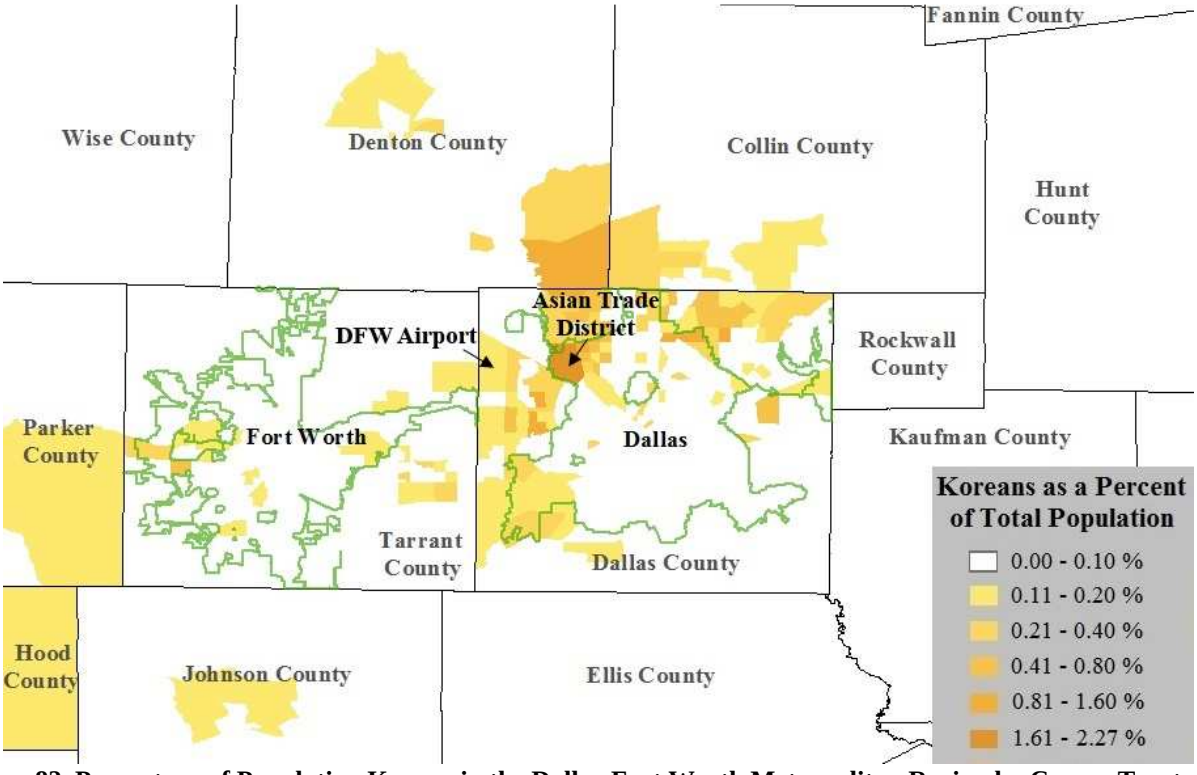
gained greatly in popularity when Yumbii, his food truck, began to visit other neighborhoods in 2010 (Photo 42). Lee's Korean taco is now the city's most loved Korean-American fusion dish and is becoming known beyond the Georgia border (*Yumbii* 2014).

Photo 41. Street Sign for the TaKorea Restaurant in Midtown Atlanta, June 2, 2012. Source: Raoul de la Cruz (used with permission).

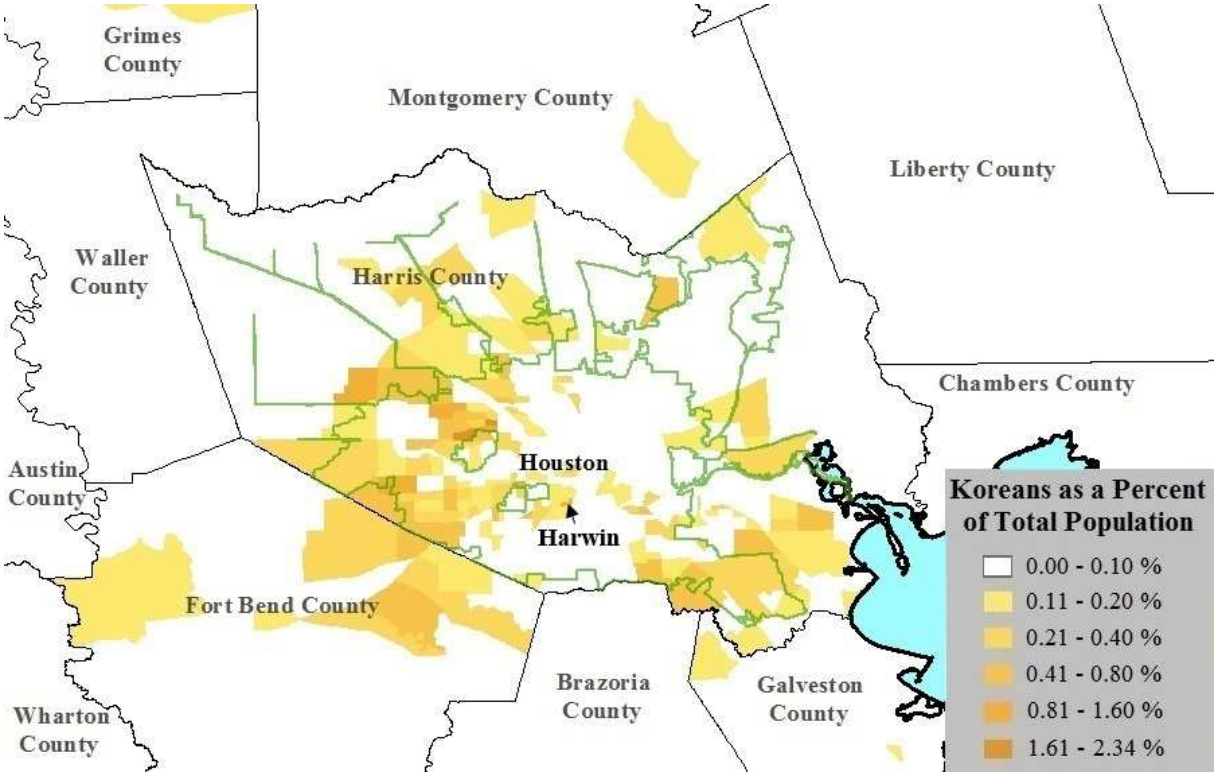
Photo 42. Yumbii Truck in an Atlanta Neighborhood, April 15, 2009. Source: N-Sai (used with permission).

Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston

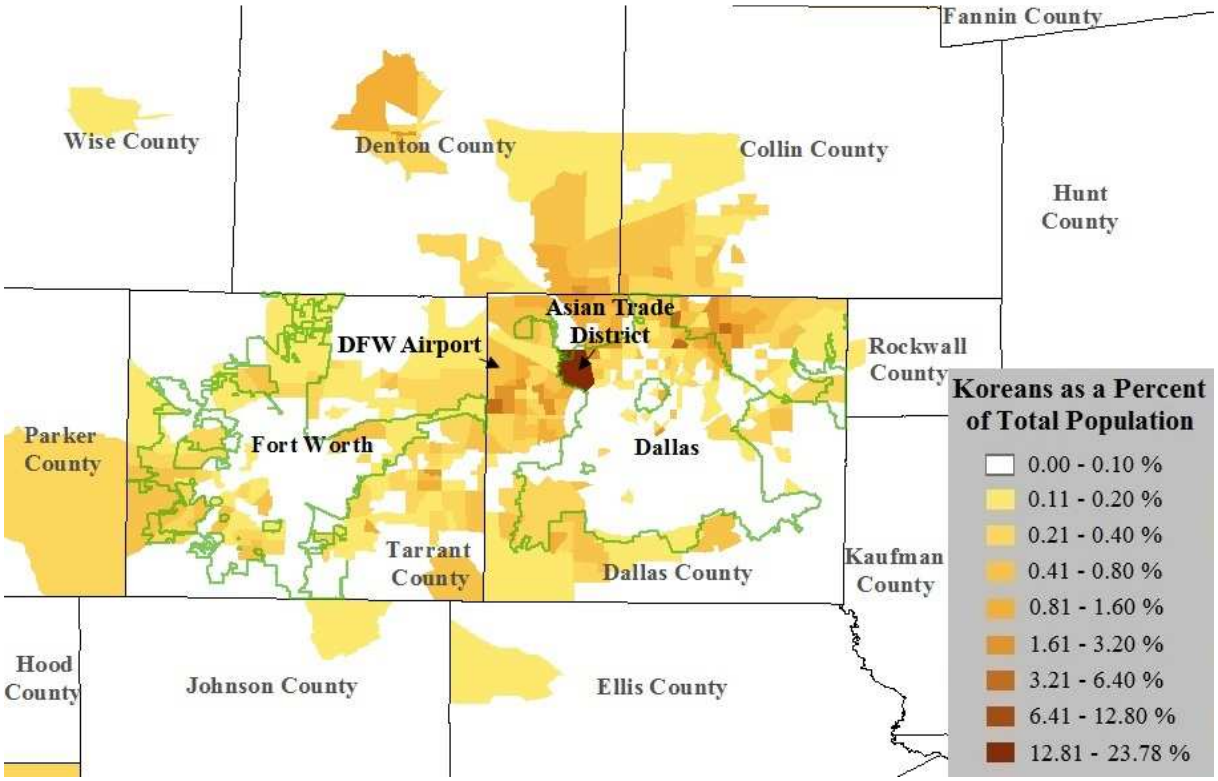
Similar to what happened in Atlanta, the Korean population in Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston also was minuscule for the first two decades after the immigrant reform act of 1965 (Table 49). Even in 1980, the numbers of Koreans in the cities were too small to form any type of ethnic enclave (Maps 82 and 83). Only in 1990 did concentrations appear in a few locations near the city boundaries where real estate values were cheap (Maps 84 and 85). In Dallas, the focus was in the northwest corner of the city where Harry Hines Boulevard meets Royal Lane. This area soon would become known as the Asian Trade District, but when Sam Moon's father migrated there in 1983, the area was known more for its crime rate than commercial enterprises. In fact, a large stretch of Harry Hines Boulevard still contained the shells of failed factories. Moon's family and other Koreans in Dallas saw business potential there. Taking advantage of



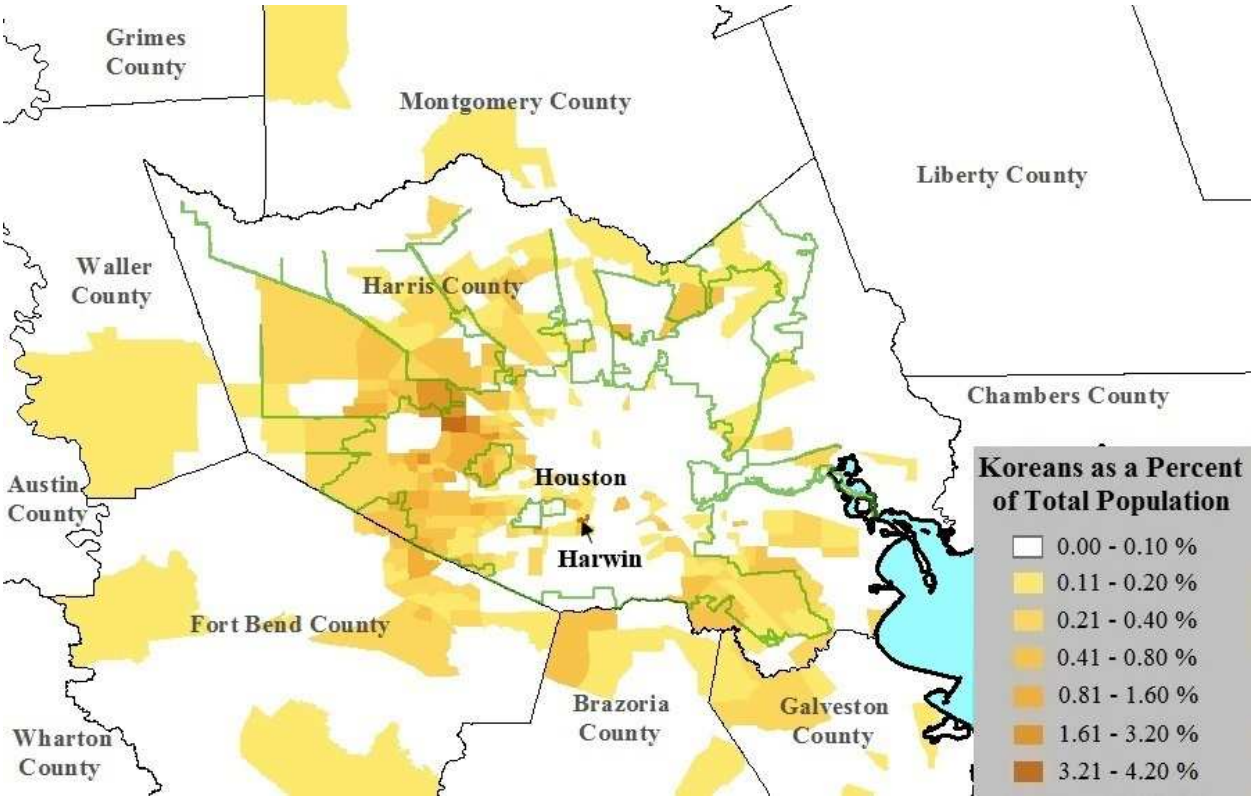
Map 82. Percentage of Population Korean in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.



Map 83. Percentage of Population Korean in the Houston Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.



Map 84. Percentage of Population Korean in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.



Map 85. Percentage of Population Korean in the Houston Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.

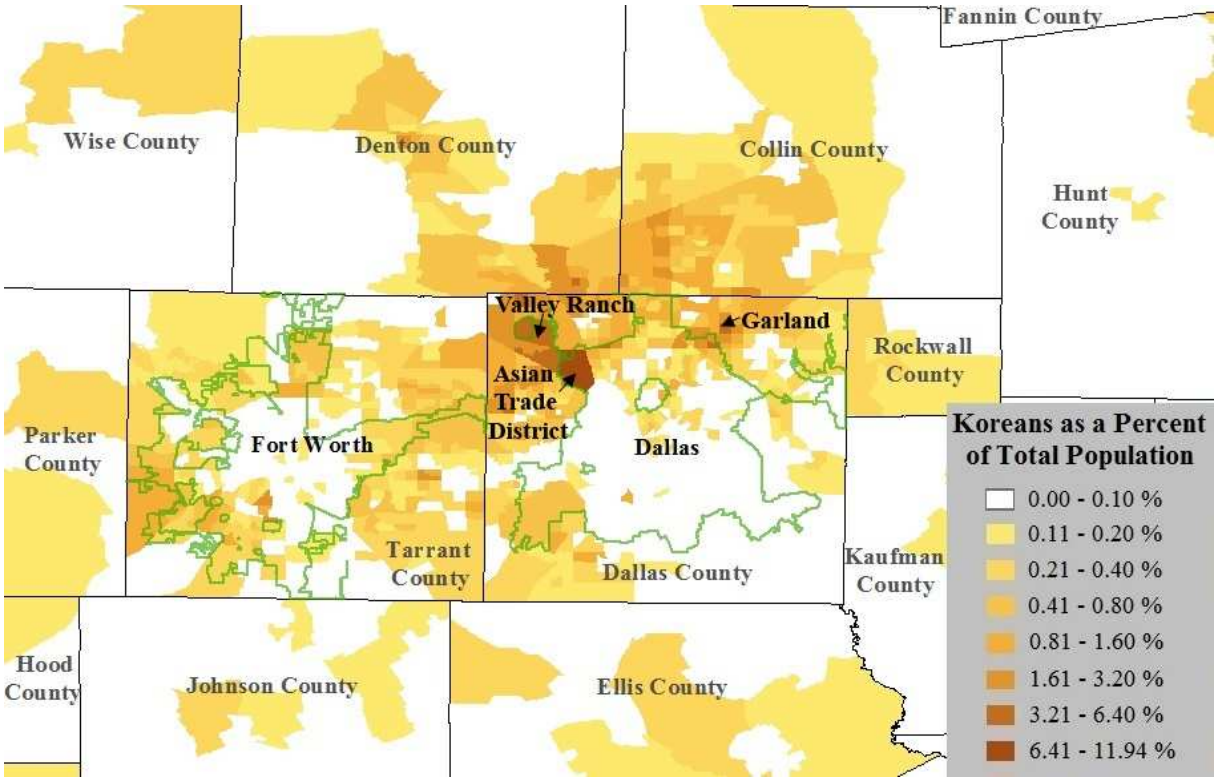
close access to the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, Mr. Moon and his colleagues imported luggage and gifts for wholesale distribution. Fifteen years later, more than one hundred Korean wholesale and retail businesses (about equal numbers of each) were located there (*The Dallas Business Journal*, November 18, 2001).

The reason why wholesale businesses became popular among Koreans in Dallas is unclear. The idea of owning businesses in general is not unusual, of course, and I suspect that the wholesaling idea spread only after other people saw the success of the Moon family. Certainly, the easy access to an international airport aided this type of enterprise. It also appears that the heyday of the Asian Trade District may now be in the past. The Korean community has spread to other locales within the metropolitan area (Table 56, Maps 86 and 87). At the same

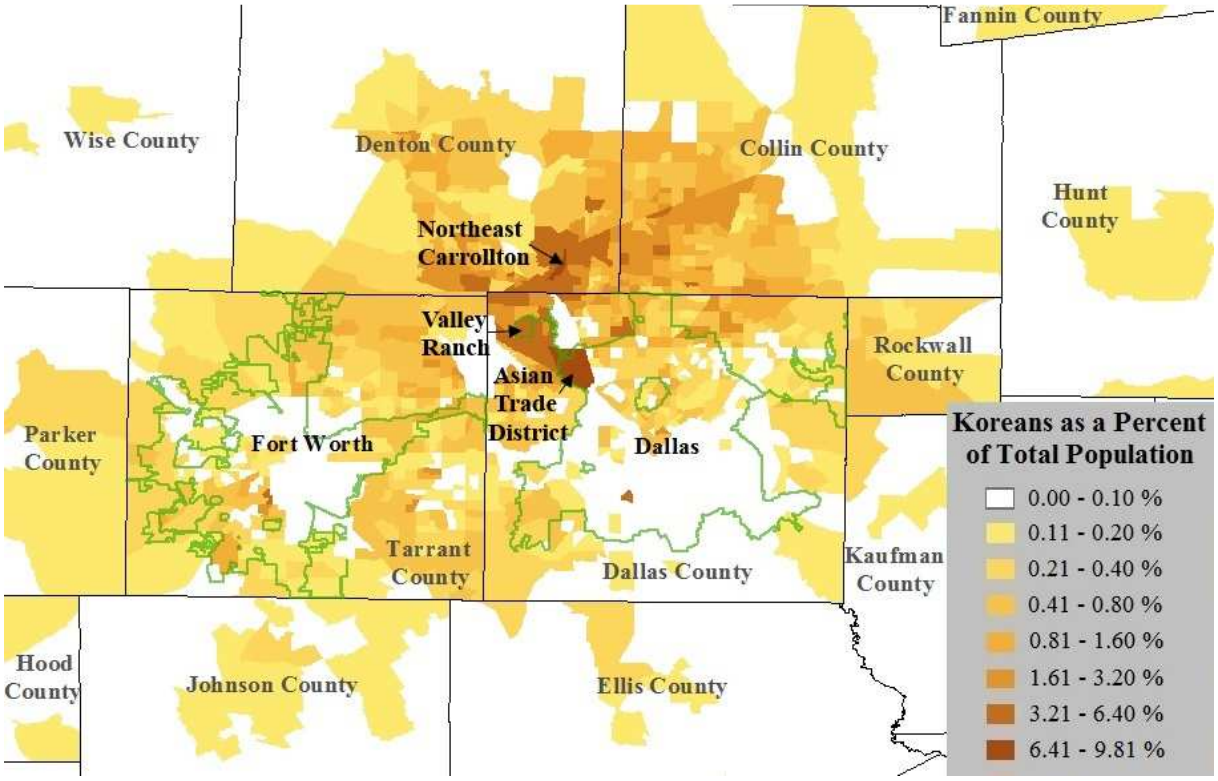
time, the trade district's population has become mixed, although most strip malls and stores there are still operated by Koreans (Photo 43).

	Race		1980	1990	2000	2010
Population	White		1,421	613	624	1,257
	Black		96	91	170	340
	Native		8	9	17	17
	Asian		56	608	356	383
		Chinese	0	6	8	20
		Indian	4	142	52	55
		Korean	40	345	166	249
		Laotian	0	16	8	1
		Thai	0	10	13	9
		Vietnamese	12	70	98	19
		Other Asian	0	19	11	30
	Hispanic and Others		184	130	223	540
	Total		**1,765**	**1,451**	**1,390**	**2,537**
Percentage	White		80.5%	42.2%	44.9%	49.5%
	Black		5.4%	6.3%	12.2%	13.4%
	Native		0.5%	0.6%	1.2%	0.7%
	Asian		3.2%	41.9%	25.6%	15.1%
		Chinese	0.0%	0.4%	0.6%	0.8%
		Indian	0.2%	9.8%	3.7%	2.2%
		Korean	2.3%	23.8%	11.9%	9.8%
		Laotian	0.0%	1.1%	0.6%	0.0%
		Thai	0.0%	0.7%	0.9%	0.4%
		Vietnamese	0.7%	4.8%	7.1%	0.7%
		Other Asian	0.0%	1.3%	0.8%	1.2%
	Hispanic and Others		10.4%	9.0%	16.1%	21.3%
	Total		**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Table 56. Korean Population Distribution in the Asian Trade District in Dallas, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7, 1990_STF1, NP7, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B, and 2010_SF1b, PCT7.



Map 86. Percentage of Population Korean in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.



Map 87. Percentage of Population Korean in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

Photo 43. A Business Signage in the Asian Trade District of Dallas, August 23, 2008. Source: Gene Bob (used with permission).

Five Koreans in Houston also started wholesale businesses. This was in 1982 at 9889 Harwin Drive in the central part of the city, which was an abandoned warehouse destruct at the time (Map 85). Each of the five men specialized in a different kind of products: toys and bicycles, clothes for Hispanic women, electronics and watches, clothing accessories, and handbags. These items came from Korean importers in Los Angeles and New York and all five entrepreneurs made huge profits within a few years. Soon, many other Koreans along with Chinese, Indians, and Arabs moved into the area to initiate similar types of businesses.

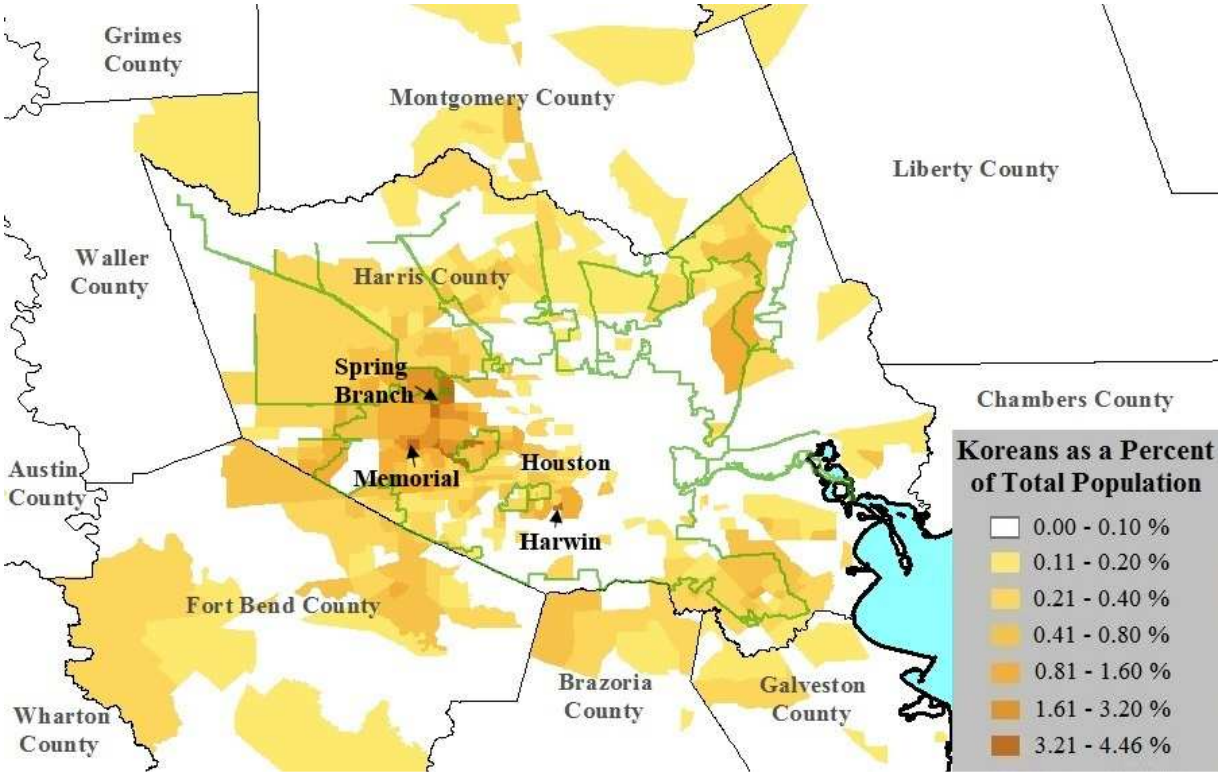
The boom lasted until 1987 when the owner of the 9889 Harwin building raised rents. Four out of the original five entrepreneurs along with several other Koreans then relocated to a new site across the street where their success continued. In contrast, the owner of the original building declared bankruptcy only a few months later. Interestingly, no one bothered to remove the signage from the initial wholesale center (Photo 44). Until the late 1990s, the Asians operated at least a half of the wholesale businesses in Harwin area. After that, Korean dominance declined as people diversified their economic pursuits (Kwon 1997, 78-80).

Photo 44. A Decaying Sign from the 9889 Wholesale Center at 9889 Harwin Drive, Houston, July 24, 2010. Source: Lauren O. (used with permission).

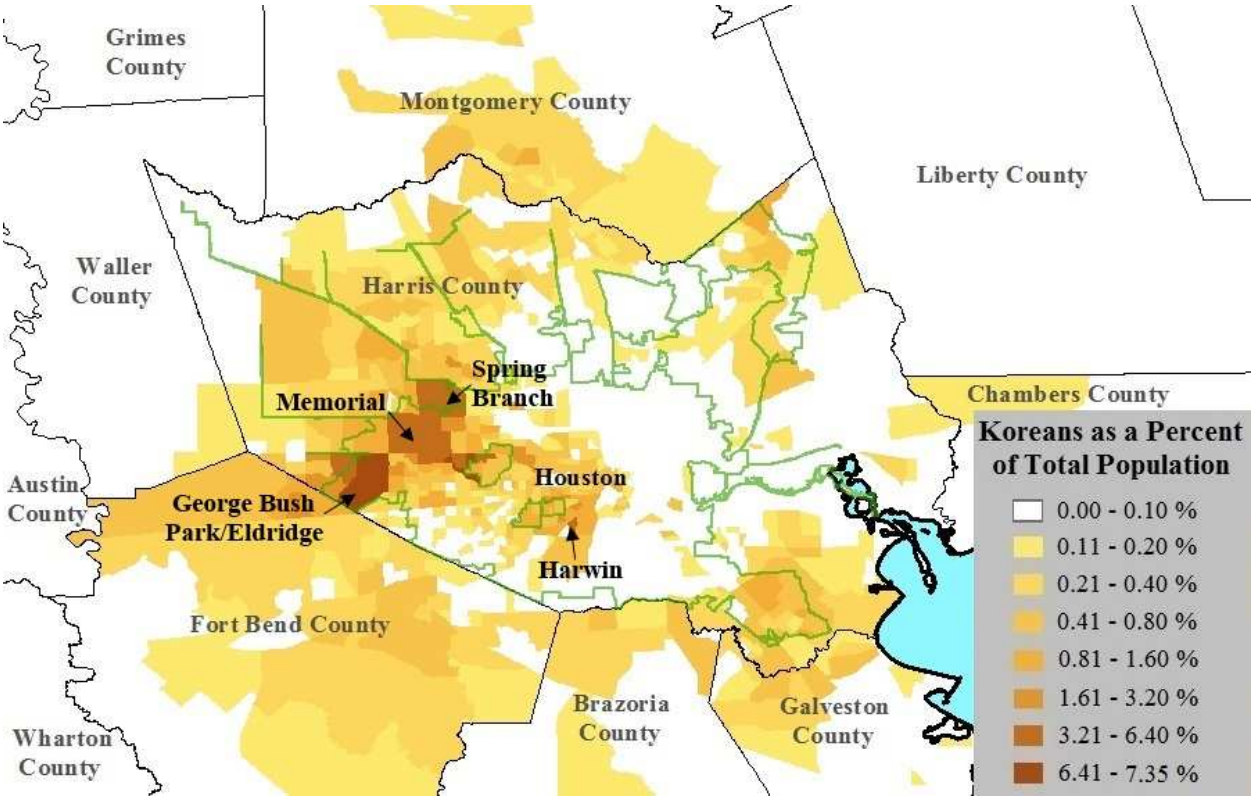
While most Korean businesses in Houston remain in the Harwin area, a majority of the local Koreans now live in the northwestern part of the city (Table 57). And, like their kinsmen in most other Midwestern and Southern cities, they have not formed any new clusterings of note (Maps 88 and 89).

Region	City	1980	1990	2000	2010
Population	Northwest Houston	1,112	2,217	3,564	5,032
	Houston City	2,226	4,063	5,870	7,578
	Total Houston	**3,428**	**7,200**	**10,071**	**17,484**
Percentage	Northwest Houston	32.4%	30.8%	35.4%	28.8%
	Houston City	64.9%	56.4%	58.3%	43.3%
	Total Houston	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Table 57. Korean Populations in the Zip Code Areas 77024, 77041, 77043, 77055, 77079, 77080, 77084, and 77094 in Parts of the Houston Metropolitan Region, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7, 1990_STF1, NP7, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B, and 2010_SF1b, PCT7.



Map 88. Percentage of Population Korean in the Houston Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.



Map 89. Percentage of Population Korean in the Houston Metropolitan Region by Census Tract, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

Chapter 11

Military Towns

Even before the major reform in immigration law in 1965, small numbers of Koreans could and did enter the U. S. A large portion of these were women who had married U. S. servicemen during and after the Korean War of the early 1950s (Table 58). Many of these brides settled in military towns where their husbands were sent on their next duty assignments. Geographically, they were distributed fairly evenly throughout all military bases in the U. S., with small concentrations at the bases from which American troops had been sent to the war (Tables 59 and 60). At least until 1970, the numbers of Koreans in such locations were small, but their presence often attracted other immigrants once the 1965 reform began to take effect.

In this chapter, I want to explain not only the pattern of military-town settlement, but also how war brides and their children have been perceived by Korean and Korean-American society. These views have changed considerably over time. In the past, Koreans sometimes would call such a woman a *Yanggongju* (western princess) or a *Yangssaekshi* (western bride), but a more common term was *Wianbu* (comfort woman or prostitute). While most of the war brides certainly were not prostitutes and actually sent significant amounts of money home that contributed to South Korea's economic recovery, their general image within the Korean society remained negative before 1970 (Cho 2008, 3). Even though many Korean parents had encouraged their daughters to work at the various U. S. military bases in their country because the wages were good, their tone changed if marriage to a foreign soldier occurred, especially if the husband were not white. Most often, the women were called forgotten daughters. And, in fact, many of these daughters did lose contact with their family in Korea once they left for the

Year	Quota Immigrants	Non-Quota Immigrants					Total Immigrants
		Wives of U.S. Citizen	Husbands of U.S. Citizen	Children of U. S. Citizen	Others	Total Non-Quota Immigrants	
1958	103	410	25	25	1,041	1,501	1,604
1959	109	488	36	57	1,030	1,611	1,720
1960	96	649	63	98	601	1,411	1,507
1961	109	405	53	60	907	1,425	1,534
1962	113	692	73	176	484	1,425	1,538
1963	102	1,350	78	583	467	2,478	2,580
1964	103	1,340	86	711	122	2,259	2,362
1965	114	1,281	70	653	47	2,051	2,165
1966	531	1,225	71	594	71	1,961	2,492
1967	1,721	1,389	80	649	117	2,235	3,956
1968	1,550	1,356	59	690	156	2,261	3,811
1969	2,904	1,954	90	949	148	3,141	6,045
1970	5,100	2,646	94	1,208	266	4,214	9,314
1971	9,073	3,033	94	1,570	527	5,224	14,297
1972	12,907	2,148	109	1,940	1,772	5,969	18,876
1973	15,703	2,134	90	2,547	2,456	7,227	22,930
1974	19,659	2,461	100	2,767	3,041	8,369	28,028
1975	19,782	2,155	124	3,246	3,055	8,580	28,362
1976	20,011	4,276	155	4,375	1,986	10,792	30,803
1977	20,184	3,454	170	4,328	2,781	10,733	30,917

Table 58. Numbers of Korean Immigrants to the U. S. between 1958 and 1977 by Selected Groups. Source: The Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service 1958-1977, Table 6.

Place	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Fort Belvoir, VA	20	107	84	47	69
Fort Benning, GA	37	90	112	95	No Data
Fort Bliss, TX	61	144	158	54	75
Fort Bragg, NC	64	257	243	236	13
Fort Campbell, KY	22	286	202	95	88
Fort Carson, CO	31	108	117	58	126
Fort Devens, MA	22	119	145	2	No Data
Fort Dix, NJ	34	100	120	27	10
Fort Gordon, GA	3	82	78	No Data	No Data
Fort Hood, TX	63	251	355	292	248
Fort Knox, KY	44	306	223	103	63
Fort Lee, VA	38	151	73	73	19
Fort Leonard Wood, MO	51	226	198	138	130
Fort Lewis, WA	82	331	349	260	150
Fort Meade, MD	37	172	187	161	95
Fort Polk, LA	No Data	227	241	127	160
Fort Riley, KS	9	226	147	73	56
Fort Rucker, AL	16	58	68	75	38
Fort Sill, OK	17	97	98	No Data	No Data
Fort Stewart, GA	11	172	140	81	30

Table 59. Korean Populations in Selected U. S. Military Installations, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1, 1980_STF1, NT7, 1990_STF1, NP7, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B, and 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

Unit	Headquarters
I Corps	Fort Bragg, NC
IX Corps	Fort Sheridan, IL
X Corps	Sherman, TX
1st Cavalry Division	Fort Hood, TX
2nd Infantry Division	Fort Lewis, WA
3rd Infantry Division	Fort Stewart, GA
7th Infantry Division	Fort Lewis and Fort McChord, WA
24th Infantry Division	Fort Riley, KS
25th Infantry Division	Schofield Barracks, Wahiawa, HI
40th Infantry Division	Los Alamitos Joint Forces Training Base, CA
45th Infantry Division	Oklahoma City, OK

Table 60. Major U. S. Army Units Participating in the Korean War. Source: Korean War Project (http://www.koreanwar.org/html/lookarmy.htm).

U. S. (Kim 2004). Such cutting words are not common any more, but negative views toward such women persist.

The Korean presence in American military towns is obviously tilted heavily toward females (Table 61). The majority of these women were in their twenties and thirties at the time of the 1980 census, and the few males present were mostly their children (Table 62).

Place	Population			Percentage		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Fort Belvoir, VA	14	93	107	13.1%	86.9%	100.0%
Fort Benning, GA	15	75	90	16.7%	83.3%	100.0%
Fort Bliss, TX	36	108	144	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%
Fort Bragg, NC	47	210	257	18.3%	81.7%	100.0%
Fort Campbell, KY	52	234	286	18.2%	81.8%	100.0%
Fort Carson, CO	18	90	108	16.7%	83.3%	100.0%
Fort Devens, MA	17	102	119	14.3%	85.7%	100.0%
Fort Dix, NJ	20	80	100	20.0%	80.0%	100.0%
Fort Gordon, GA	15	67	82	18.3%	81.7%	100.0%
Fort Hood, TX	75	176	251	29.9%	70.1%	100.0%
Fort Knox, KY	59	247	306	19.3%	80.7%	100.0%
Fort Lee, VA	22	129	151	14.6%	85.4%	100.0%
Fort Leonard Wood, MO	56	170	226	24.8%	75.2%	100.0%
Fort Lewis, WA	93	238	331	28.1%	71.9%	100.0%
Fort Meade, MD	28	144	172	16.3%	83.7%	100.0%
Fort Polk, LA	50	177	227	22.0%	78.0%	100.0%
Fort Riley, KS	45	181	226	19.9%	80.1%	100.0%
Fort Rucker, AL	7	51	58	12.1%	87.9%	100.0%
Fort Sill, OK	31	66	97	32.0%	68.0%	100.0%
Fort Stewart, GA	32	140	172	18.6%	81.4%	100.0%
Total United States	**147,825**	**206,768**	**354,593**	**41.7%**	**58.3%**	**100.0%**

Table 61. Gender of Koreans at Selected U. S. Military Installations, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF2b, NTB4.

Place	Men				Women			
	0-20	21-40	41+	Total	0-20	21-40	41+	Total
Fort Belvoir, VA	9	5	0	14	15	70	8	93
Fort Benning, GA	6	8	1	15	15	54	6	75
Fort Bliss, TX	19	17	0	36	29	76	3	108
Fort Bragg, NC	27	19	1	47	37	166	7	210
Fort Campbell, KY	24	27	1	52	26	197	11	234
Fort Carson, CO	6	12	0	18	16	72	2	90
Fort Devens, MA	13	4	0	17	18	83	1	102
Fort Dix, NJ	6	14	0	20	8	69	3	80
Fort Gordon, GA	11	4	0	15	8	52	7	67
Fort Hood, TX	37	37	1	75	39	126	11	176
Fort Knox, KY	44	14	1	59	52	181	14	247
Fort Lee, VA	7	15	0	22	34	90	5	129
Fort Leonard Wood, MO	37	18	1	56	37	126	7	170
Fort Lewis, WA	42	50	1	93	38	190	10	238
Fort Meade, MD	18	10	0	28	24	113	7	144
Fort Polk, LA	34	16	0	50	42	121	14	177
Fort Riley, KS	23	22	0	45	29	144	8	181
Fort Rucker, AL	3	3	1	7	9	40	2	51
Fort Sill, OK	17	14	0	31	11	53	2	66
Fort Stewart, GA	20	12	0	32	22	115	3	140
Fort Belvoir, VA	64.3%	35.7%	0.0%	100.0%	16.1%	75.3%	8.6%	100.0%
Fort Benning, GA	40.0%	53.3%	6.7%	100.0%	20.0%	72.0%	8.0%	100.0%
Fort Bliss, TX	52.8%	47.2%	0.0%	100.0%	26.8%	70.4%	2.8%	100.0%
Fort Bragg, NC	57.5%	40.4%	2.1%	100.0%	17.6%	79.1%	3.3%	100.0%
Fort Campbell, KY	46.2%	51.9%	1.9%	100.0%	11.1%	84.2%	4.7%	100.0%
Fort Carson, CO	33.3%	6.7%	0.0%	100.0%	17.8%	80.0%	2.2%	100.0%
Fort Devens, MA	76.5%	23.5%	0.0%	100.0%	17.6%	81.4%	1.0%	100.0%
Fort Dix, NJ	30.0%	70.0%	0.0%	100.0%	10.0%	86.2%	3.8%	100.0%
Fort Gordon, GA	73.3%	26.7%	0.0%	100.0%	11.9%	77.6%	10.5%	100.0%
Fort Hood, TX	49.3%	49.3%	1.4%	100.0%	22.2%	71.6%	6.2%	100.0%
Fort Knox, KY	74.6%	23.7%	1.7%	100.0%	26.3%	69.8%	3.9%	100.0%
Fort Lee, VA	31.8%	68.2%	0.0%	100.0%	21.8%	74.1%	4.1%	100.0%
Fort Leonard Wood, MO	66.1%	32.1%	1.8%	100.0%	16.0%	79.8%	4.2%	100.0%
Fort Lewis, WA	45.2%	53.7%	1.1%	100.0%	16.7%	78.5%	4.8%	100.0%
Fort Meade, MD	64.3%	35.7%	0.0%	100.0%	23.7%	68.4%	7.9%	100.0%
Fort Polk, LA	68.0%	32.0%	0.0%	100.0%	16.0%	79.6%	4.4%	100.0%
Fort Riley, KS	51.1%	48.9%	0.0%	100.0%	17.6%	78.4%	3.9%	100.0%
Fort Rucker, AL	42.9%	42.9%	14.2%	100.0%	17.7%	78.4%	3.9%	100.0%
Fort Sill, OK	54.8%	45.2%	0.0%	100.0%	16.7%	80.3%	3.0%	100.0%
Fort Stewart, GA	62.5%	37.5%	0.0%	100.0%	15.7%	82.1%	2.2%	100.0%

Table 62. Age and Gender of Koreans at Selected U. S. Military Installations, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF2b, NTB8B.

Early Comers

The life experiences of Korean military wives, especially ones who immigrated during the earlier years, were distinctive from most other kinsmen in the U. S. Obviously, having American husbands was the single biggest cause for this. Both good and bad sides existed for such marriages. By living with their American husbands, the women enjoyed relatively stable lives from an economic perspective because their husbands were employed by the government. Also, they could learn American culture and customs much faster than most immigrants with help from their spouses (Yuh 2002, 84-85).

Life for Korean military brides was not easy, however. Interracial marriages back then were not common, and in many states, even prohibited. These women often were isolated mentally from mainstream American society and sometimes publically humiliated (Yuh 2002, 84-85). In addition, the women also were cut off from the Korean-American community (Yu 1987, 185-186). Rev. Geumhyun Yeo has recalled what happened in her Korean-American church in the past. When a few Korean military wives visited, clearly looking for companionship from church members, no one approached them. They sat alone during services and were not asked to participate in other activities. Later, when these new women proposed that they might prepare food for the church's annual Thanksgiving dinner, the resident women's group rejected the offer. One of the church members said bluntly that: "You are not really one of us. We will tolerate your presence, but only as long as we can ignore you" (Yuh 2002, 185).

Another set of problems for the war brides came from their husbands. The women had thought that marriage to American soldiers would elevate their living conditions. Some even had visions of being treated like the glamorous actresses in the Hollywood movies they had watched

in Korea. In contrast to this view, a majority of the American husbands seemed to want their wives to be stereotypical Asian women: submissive, self-sacrificing, and humble. Many of the men demanded that their wives provide maidlike service. One woman recalled that her husband made her starch his military uniforms the laborious, old-fashioned way every day. Another added that: "My husband thought that shining the shoes every morning for her husband was just part of Korean culture."

Because of the widely differing expectations between the Korean women and their American husbands, divorces were common. Interestingly, most of these women who remarried again selected an American mate. Some of them confessed that they did so for survival, because they still lacked the language and other skills necessary to live in the U. S. Others claimed that, even with their flaws, American partners were still better than Korean men (Yuh 2002, 107-109).

Another major factor in creating a unique life experience for the military brides has been the remote, rural locations of most army towns. Geographical isolation limited the social activities of these spouses and made them stay dependent on their husbands. Also, not many jobs were available for Korean women in these military towns. Most of the brides had poor educations and the only jobs they could find paid poorly (Table 63). Language was another barrier. With effort, many managed to learn the new language, but some grew frustrated when their progress lagged behind that of their children (Tables 64 and 65).

Angela Joh has admitted that her inability to speak English in the past made her life miserable. She came to the U. S. in 1972 with her military husband at the age of sixteen. Obviously, she had little education, and at the same time, she was pregnant. Not knowing the language, she was completely dependent on her husband, who knew some Korean. One time,

while at Fort Lewis, they lived in nearby Tacoma, and Angela had a rare chance to take an English class. She declined, however, thinking that taking care of her child and doing housework were better choices. Later, when her husband was transferred to a base near Fairbanks, Alaska, she started to work, but her lack of communication skills restricted her to menial, on-base jobs.

Place	Population			Percentage		
	High School or Under	College or Above	Total	High School or Under	College or Above	Total
Fort Belvoir, VA	53	8	61	86.9%	13.1%	100.0%
Fort Benning, GA	68	21	89	76.4%	23.6%	100.0%
Fort Bliss, TX	64	13	77	83.1%	16.9%	100.0%
Fort Bragg, NC	134	32	166	80.7%	19.3%	100.0%
Fort Campbell, KY	88	0	88	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Fort Carson, CO	49	16	65	75.4%	24.6%	100.0%
Fort Devens, MA	71	20	91	78.0%	22.0%	100.0%
Fort Dix, NJ	39	24	63	61.9%	38.1%	100.0%
Fort Gordon, GA	28	8	36	77.8%	22.2%	100.0%
Fort Hood, TX	201	42	243	82.7%	17.3%	100.0%
Fort Knox, KY	84	28	112	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Fort Lee, VA	35	12	47	74.5%	25.5%	100.0%
Fort Leonard Wood, MO	110	10	120	91.7%	8.3%	100.0%
Fort Lewis, WA	168	35	203	82.8%	17.2%	100.0%
Fort Meade, MD	110	10	120	91.7%	8.3%	100.0%
Fort Polk, LA	124	25	149	83.2%	16.8%	100.0%
Fort Riley, KS	78	15	93	83.9%	16.1%	100.0%
Fort Rucker, AL	35	7	42	83.3%	16.7%	100.0%
Fort Sill, OK	21	11	32	65.6%	34.4%	100.0%
Fort Stewart, GA	82	7	89	92.1%	7.9%	100.0%
Total United States	**147,218**	**121,947**	**269,165**	**54.7%**	**45.3%**	**100.0%**

Table 63. Educational Attainment of Korean Women over the Age of 25 at Selected Military Installations, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF4b, NPB44.

Place	Population					Percentage				
	Speak English Only	Speak Foreign Language				Speak English Only	Speak Foreign Language			
		Speak English Very Well	Speak English Well	Speak English Not Well	Speak English Not At All		Speak English Very Well	Speak English Well	Speak English Not Well	Speak English Not At All
Fort Belvoir, VA	19	20	18	10	4	26.8%	28.2%	25.3%	14.1%	5.6%
Fort Benning, GA	21	28	42	25	11	16.5%	22.0%	33.1%	19.7%	8.7%
Fort Bliss, TX	21	40	47	0	0	19.4%	37.1%	43.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Fort Campbell, KY	32	72	45	21	0	18.8%	42.3%	26.5%	12.4%	0.0%
Fort Carson, CO	28	27	29	15	0	28.3%	27.3%	29.3%	15.1%	0.0%
Fort Devens, MA	5	26	43	17	0	5.5%	28.6%	47.2%	18.7%	0.0%
Fort Dix, NJ	35	17	15	0	6	48.0%	23.3%	20.5%	0.0%	8.2%
Fort Gordon, GA	0	28	9	18	0	0.0%	50.9%	16.4%	32.7%	0.0%
Fort Hood, TX	26	73	146	40	14	8.7%	24.4%	48.8%	13.4%	4.7%
Fort Knox, KY	20	66	58	20	2	12.1%	39.8%	34.9%	12.0%	1.2%
Fort Lee, VA	0	23	29	0	0	0.0%	44.2%	55.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Fort Leonard Wood, MO	29	71	45	25	0	17.0%	41.8%	26.5%	14.7%	0.0%
Fort Lewis, WA	24	87	102	42	0	9.4%	34.1%	40.0%	16.5%	0.0%
Fort Meade, MD	0	36	67	17	0	0.0%	30.0%	55.8%	14.2%	0.0%
Fort Polk, LA	20	62	58	9	0	13.4%	41.6%	38.9%	6.1%	0.0%
Fort Riley, KS	6	27	56	14	0	5.8%	26.2%	54.4%	13.6%	0.0%
Fort Rucker, AL	7	21	14	0	0	16.7%	50.0%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Fort Sill, OK	9	6	43	0	0	15.5%	10.3%	74.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Fort Stewart, GA	0	18	75	14	0	0.0%	16.8%	70.1%	13.1%	0.0%
Total United States	**65,908**	**149,844**	**165,379**	**138,025**	**32,616**	**11.9%**	**27.2%**	**30.0%**	**25.0%**	**5.9%**

Table 64. Language Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English by Koreans over the Age of 18 at Selected Military Installations, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, Source: 1990_STF4b, NPB21.

Place	Population					Percentage				
	Speak English Only	Speak Foreign Language				Speak English Only	Speak Foreign Language			
		Speak English Very Well	Speak English Well	Speak English Not Well	Speak English Not At All		Speak English Very Well	Speak English Well	Speak English Not Well	Speak English Not At All
Fort Belvoir, VA	11	0	0	0	0	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Fort Benning, GA	24	0	0	0	0	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Fort Bliss, TX	28	0	5	5	0	73.6%	0.0%	13.2%	13.2%	0.0%
Fort Campbell, KY	4	0	13	15	0	12.5%	0.0%	40.6%	46.9%	0.0%
Fort Carson, CO	7	0	0	0	0	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Fort Devens, MA	23	10	5	0	0	60.5%	26.3%	13.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Fort Dix, NJ	19	0	0	0	0	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Fort Gordon, GA	27	0	0	0	0	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Fort Hood, TX	73	34	0	0	0	68.2%	31.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Fort Knox, KY	15	2	2	8	0	55.6%	7.4%	7.4%	29.6%	0.0%
Fort Lee, VA	7	0	0	0	0	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Fort Leonard Wood, MO	0	10	0	0	0	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Fort Lewis, WA	19	26	12	3	0	31.7%	43.3%	20.0%	5.0%	0.0%
Fort Meade, MD	15	0	13	0	0	53.6%	0.0%	46.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Fort Polk, LA	48	28	0	0	0	63.2%	36.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Fort Riley, KS	8	0	0	0	0	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Fort Rucker, AL	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Fort Sill, OK	8	0	0	0	0	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Fort Stewart, GA	54	0	0	0	0	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total United States	**67,727**	**68,158**	**24,825**	**13,540**	**1,142**	**38.6%**	**38.9%**	**14.2%**	**7.7%**	**0.6%**

Table 65. Language Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English by Koreans between the Ages of 5 and 17 at Selected Military Installations, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, Source: 1990_STF4b, NPB21.

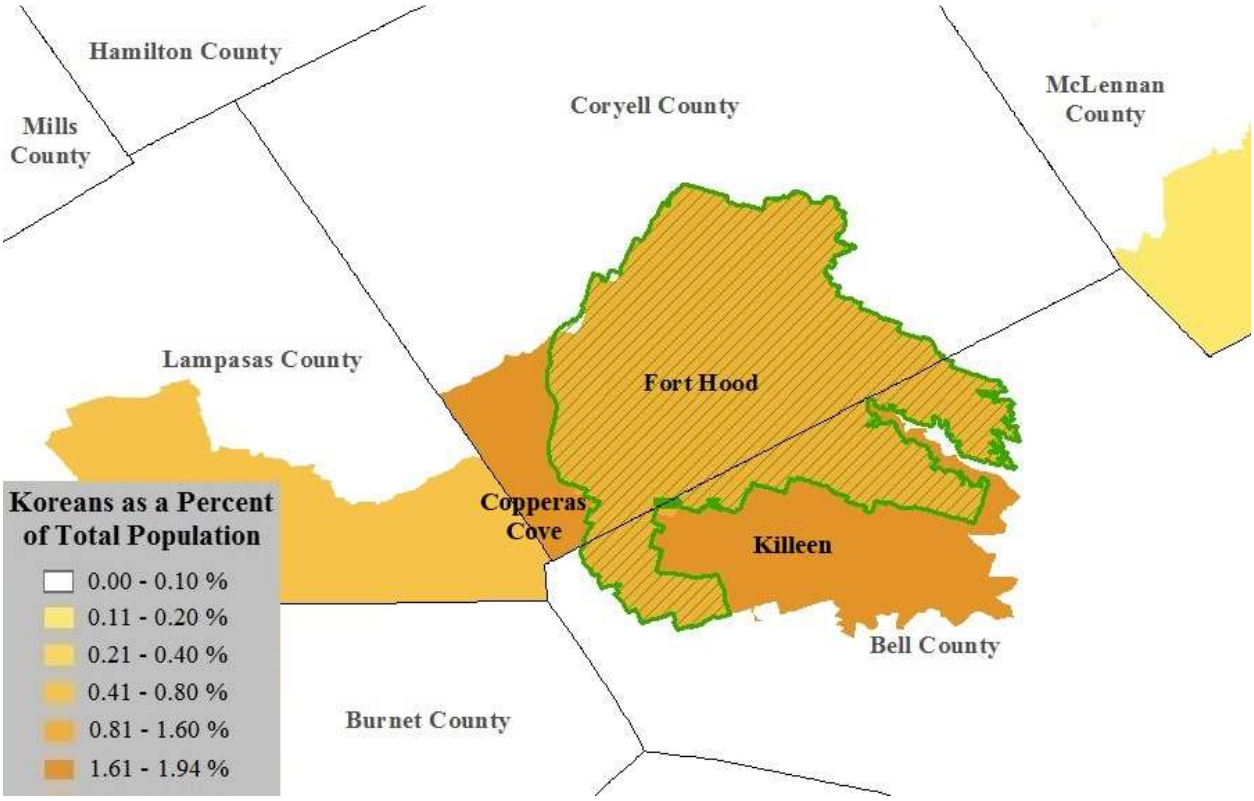
Joh explained that employment choices for foreign military wives were very limited back then. She grew discouraged, and over time, began to pattern her lifestyle after her alcoholic husband. While at Fort Devens in Massachusetts, she went to bars and even had affairs. Although she finally learned English through barroom conversations, her marriage ended. Finally, after converting to Catholicism and changing her lifestyle, she found a measure of success. By working hard at two different jobs, she was able to raise her three sons successfully (Kim 1991).

While Angela Joh was able to stay in the U. S. after her divorce, she might have been deported if it had happened sooner. Most of the Korean women were not aware of their residential status, but foreign-born spouses of U. S. citizens used to receive only two years of conditional residency when they arrived in America. If her husband did not file a proof-of-marriage statement within ninety days after that two-year date, the woman automatically became illegal. This law was made to prevent marriage frauds, but some husbands used it to control their wives. Mrs. K in Leavenworth, Kansas, has confessed, for example, that her husband often told her that "You'd better do as I say or else I'll divorce you and you'll get kicked out of this country." She did not like his attitude, but back then, believed she had no choice but to submit (Jeong 2005).

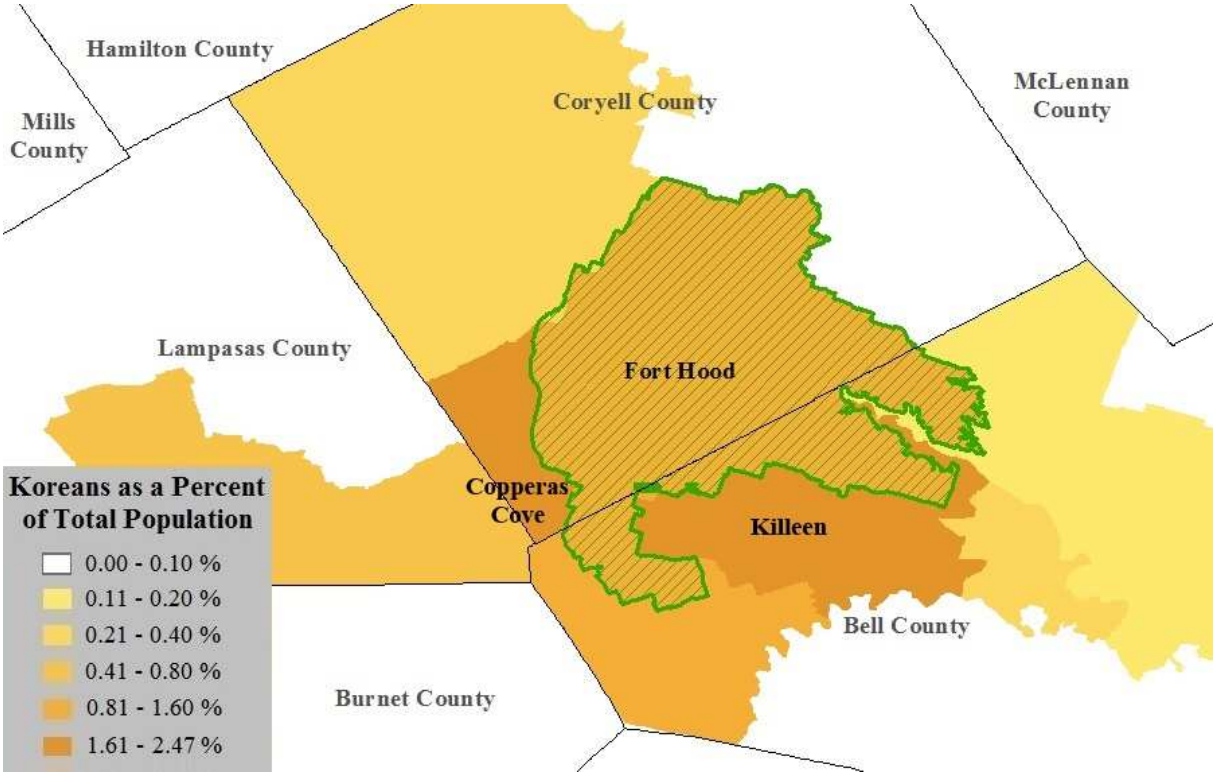
Besides cultural attitudes, the sizes of the various towns, the number of local Koreans, and geographical location all influenced the life experiences of the Korean military brides. The ones who settled on bases adjacent to big cities, like Fort Belvoir near Washington, D. C. and Fort Lewis near Tacoma, Washington, had the best chances to find nonmilitary-related work and to meet other Koreans at ethnic churches and stores. In contrast, these chances were lower for people in smaller places. However, wherever the women lived, they were isolated. Basically,

they lived in military surroundings rather than in ethnic enclaves or mixed neighborhoods. This had to be true, of course, at least until their husbands retired, but since these young brides were often in their teens and twenties when they arrived in the U. S., they often lived in military towns for two decades.

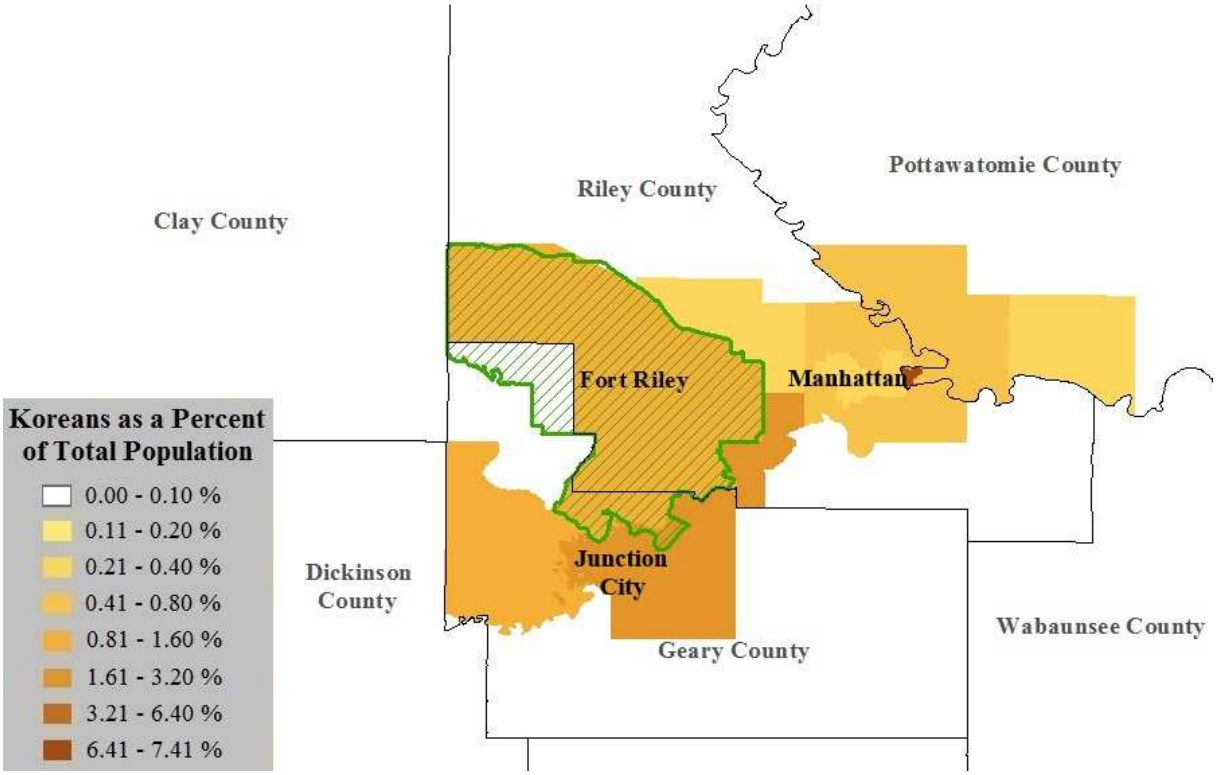
In Fort Hood, Texas, the largest military base in the world, most of the married soldiers lived in Killeen and Copperas Cove, cities located just beyond the main gate. This was true for the Korean wives as well (Maps 90 and 91). This residential pattern also held true at smaller Army posts. Near Fort Riley, Kansas, for example, Junction City received a large Korean influx in the 1970s and 1980s, as did Manhattan, which also had a large ethnic student population (Maps 92 and 93). Similarly, Daleville, Alabama, just south of Fort Rucker, received most of its Korean spouse population in those same years (Maps 94 and 95).



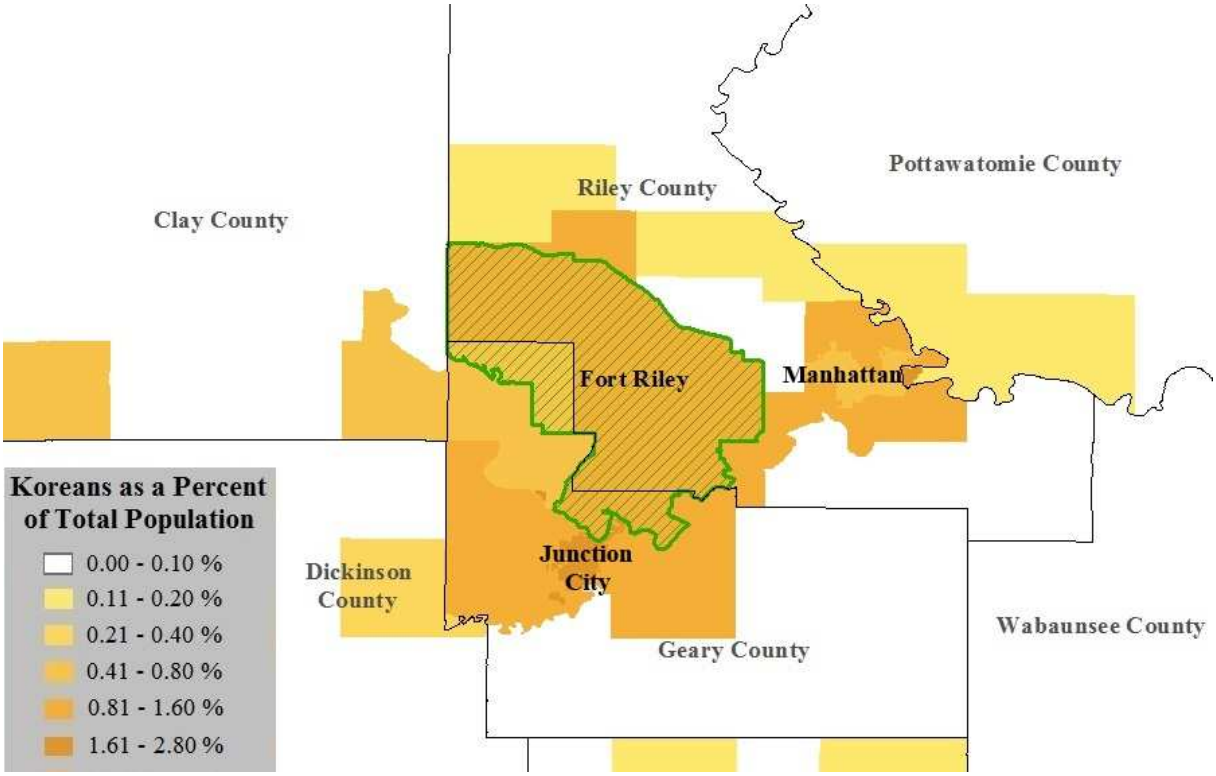
Map 90. Percentage of Population Korean at Fort Hood by County Subdivision, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.



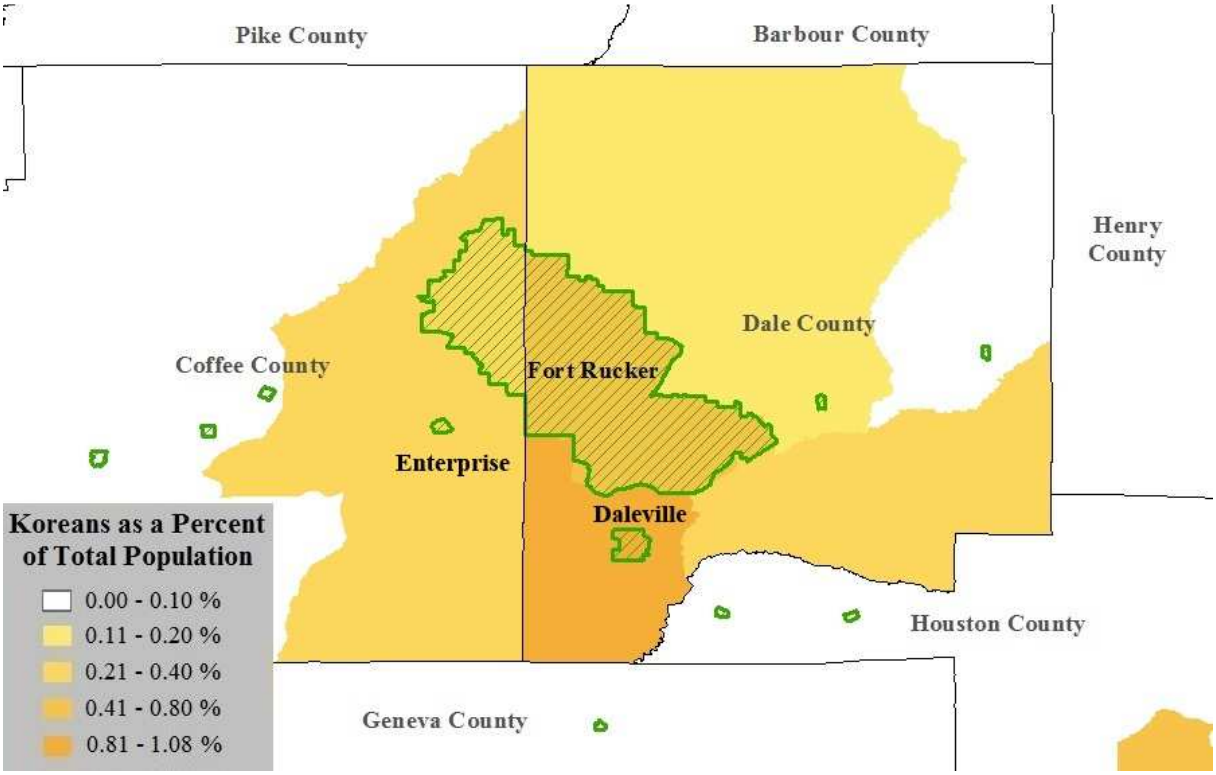
Map 91. Percentage of Population Korean at Fort Hood by County Subdivision, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.



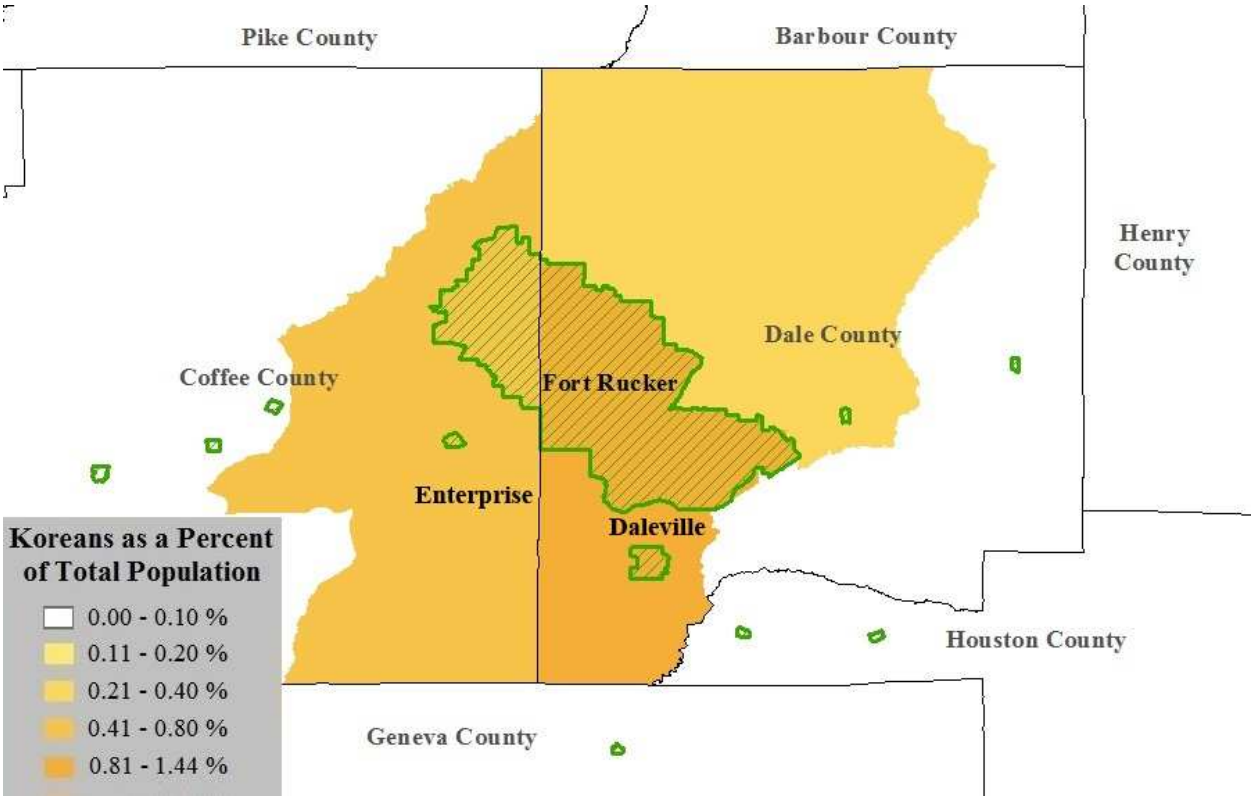
Map 92. Percentage of Population Korean at Fort Riley by County Subdivision, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.



Map 93. Percentage of Population Korean at Fort Riley by County Subdivision, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.



Map 94. Percentage of Population Korean at Fort Rucker by County Subdivision, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.



Map 95. Percentage of Population Korean at Fort Rucker by County Subdivision, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.

Youth Group

After booms during the 1970s and the 1980s, the Korean ethnic population at most military towns decreased over the next two decades (Table 59). This largely was a product of a reduced American military presence in South Korea, but aging Korean spouses was a factor as well. Small growth of the ethnic populations did occur at some locations, probably caused by growing numbers of mixed-race children (Table 66).

The children of the Korean war brides form an interesting group, one with widely differing allegiances to their Korean heritage. Some of these people wanted to learn as much about Korea as they could while growing up. Angela Schoeb is an example of this type, born in

Place	Korean Only	Interracial Korean	Total Korean
Fort Belvoir, VA	33	14	47
Fort Benning, GA	72	23	95
Fort Bliss, TX	40	14	54
Fort Bragg, NC	152	84	236
Fort Campbell, KY	62	33	95
Fort Carson, CO	41	17	58
Fort Devens, MA	2	0	2
Fort Dix, NJ	18	9	27
Fort Hood, TX	187	105	292
Fort Knox, KY	68	35	103
Fort Lee, VA	52	21	73
Fort Leonard Wood, MO	95	43	138
Fort Lewis, WA	175	85	260
Fort Meade, MD	98	63	161
Fort Polk, LA	85	42	127
Fort Riley, KS	45	28	73
Fort Rucker, AL	45	30	75
Fort Stewart, GA	55	26	81

Table 66. Korean and Interracial Korean Populations at Selected Military Installations, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT005B and NPCT007B.

Junction City, Kansas, in 1990 to a German-American father and a Korean mother. Her father had a long deployment at Fort Riley, and so Angela spent her youth in this small Kansas town.

She was raised in a typical American way and recalled not having much thought about being partially Korean until she turned ten years old. However, an interest in her Asian roots arose after meeting some Korean neighbors. After graduating from high school, she joined the Air Force. This decision was influenced by her father's career, of course, but she also hoped that the military life might lead her to work in Korea (Schoeb, November 7, 2012).

While Angela remained in a single military town throughout her childhood, the majority of the interracial Korean-American children experienced life in many different places as their fathers were deployed to many locations. This near-constant uprooting was a problem for many of the children, making it difficult for them to feel comfortable and make friends. They also have problems with the question "where are you from." Jackie Chain was born in Huntsville, Alabama, but has no memory of it. He remembers spending parts of his younger years in Korea, Germany, Texas, and Oklahoma before moving back to Alabama when he entered middle school. Since frequent moving is common among military families, Jackie was not the only half-Korean child in the places he stayed. In fact, one of his best friends was also Korean-American and also had other interracial Asian friends. When he was among such children, he did not experience racism. However, he was bullied and insulted by some of his classmates when he went back to Alabama. His interracial identity was visibly noticeable, but most of the children could not tell exactly what kind of mix he was. He heard curses not only for Korean but for Chinese and Mexican as well. Rather than becoming depressed, Jackie said he liked being the exotic one in school. Possibly because of this experience, he maintained a tough, independent attitude and became a rap musician (Chain, January 14, 2011).

Unlike Jackie, Benson Henderson, a UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship) competitor, said he never faced racism in his childhood. Benson's father was an African-American soldier

who met his Korean wife while stationed abroad. A year later, in 1983, Benson was born in Colorado Springs, Colorado, near Fort Carson. When he entered kindergarten, his family moved to Tacoma near Fort Lewis in Washington, and there he met five or six Korean emos. Emo means aunt in Korean, but these women were really just his mother's friends. Their children, also interracial, became Benson's everyday companions. As a result of being fed by this group of Korean mothers, he got attached to Korean foods. Even after he grew older, he said: "I could eat, like every sitting, three bowls of rice and kimchi and I'd be in heaven. Of course, I also like bulgogi, kimchi jigae, and all the different banchan." Because of his mother's influence, he learned *taekwondo* and thereby began the path toward his future job. In addition, as reminders of his Korean identity and to remember his happy childhood, he got several Korean character tattoos. They including his family name Henderson, *Jeonsa* (warrior), *Him* (power), and *Myeongae* (honor) (Henderson, March 24, 2010).

Another group of Koreans connected with the American military are orphans who came to the U. S. after being adopted by army personnel. No concrete data exists on this phenomenon, but while American soldiers were stationed in Korea, just after the Korean War and during the early years of immigration boom, they often would meet hungry orphans in the streets. Many of these were children of other American soldiers, since such children had a high chance for abandonment because of the negative views toward interracial people in Korea. It is not difficult to imagine Americans with warm hearts wanting to help such children, and indeed, some decided on adoption. In America, these children typically grew up in military towns.

Mary Webb, a half-Korean child, was adopted by a military mother when she was four in the mid-1970s. By following her mother's work, she grew up in the American South. Without a Korean mother figure, she had an especially difficult time meeting other Koreans. As a result,

she always felt embarrassed about being Asian until she got into middle school and met friends like herself. Now that she is a mother, she hopes to pass her Korean heritage on to her daughter (Webb, September 5, 2013).

Some Korean-American interracial children have acquired especially strong attachments to Korean culture. In most cases, this is a result of maternal influences. While most of the war brides had conflicts with their families in Korea, they also tended to miss their native land and therefore worked hard to teach their children Korean customs. Some children rejected such efforts, of course, but others became attached to the culture, coming to love spicy Korean foods, the martial art *taekwondo*, and a wide variety of other customs, songs, and dances. One such effort led to the performance of a traditional fan dance in Fayetteville near Fort Bragg (Photo 45).

Photo 45. A Traditional Korean Fan Dance Performed during the Parade of Nations in Fayetteville, North Carolina, September 23, 2011. Source: Sharilyn Wells/Fort Bragg, NC Paraglide (used with permission).

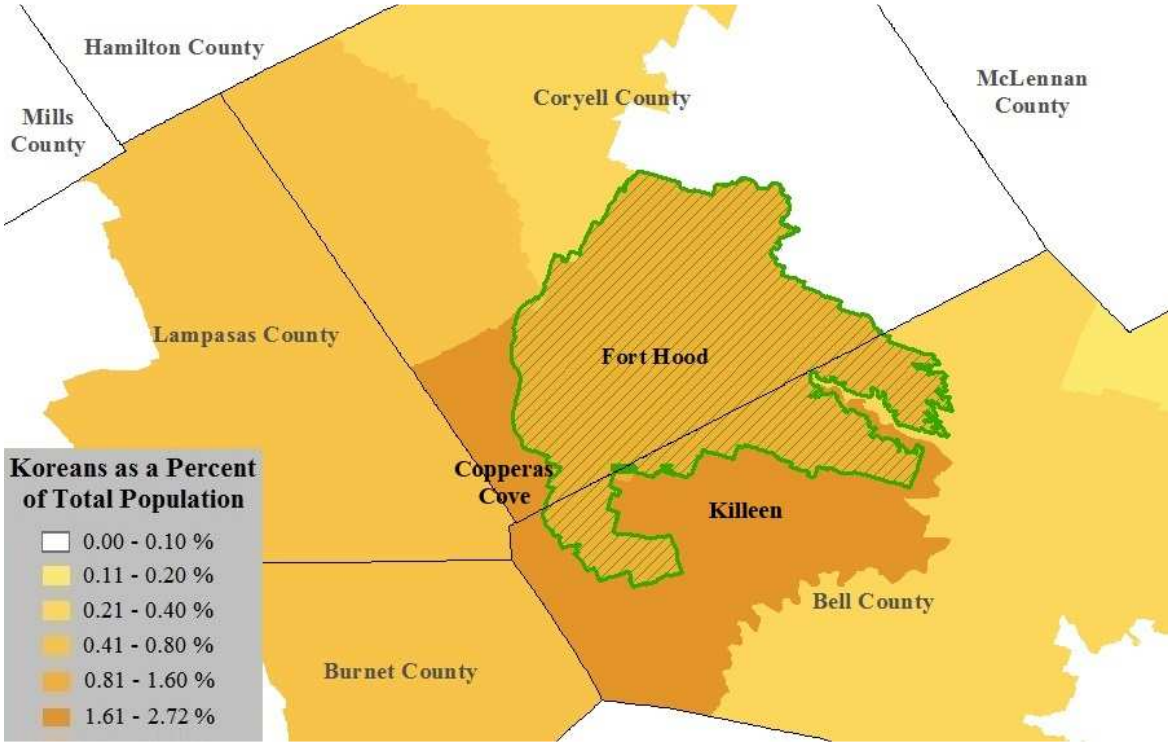
Transforming Community

As time went on, negative views on interracial marriages decreased in both Korean and American societies. Korean military brides less often were seen as forgotten daughters, and more often welcomed to participate in ethnic activities. At the same time, American military communities also transformed themselves. Because military people were more tolerant of mixed-race marriage than Americans as a whole, military towns became havens for interracial couples. So, even as the Korean ethnic populations dropped in most locations (Table 59), other interracial people moved in and a supportive atmosphere continued.

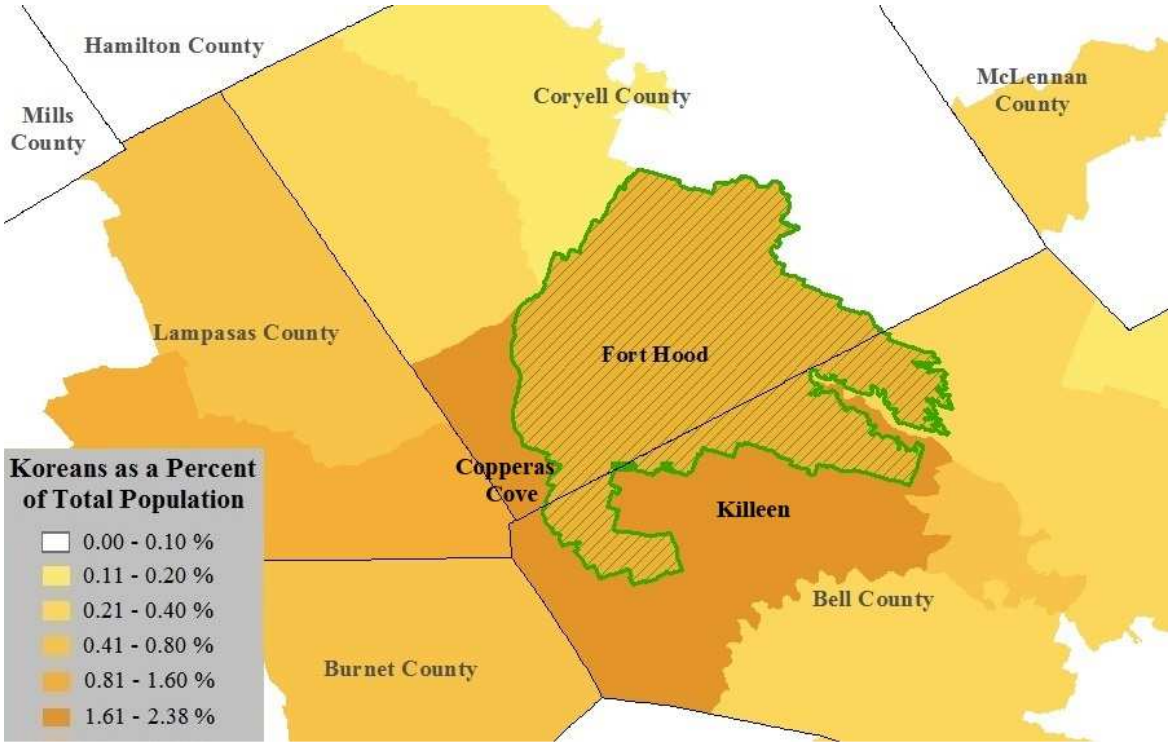
Gangil Lee, the president of Korean-American Chamber of Commerce of Killeen (Texas) near Fort Hood, was one interracial child who chose to remain in a military setting. When he was in Korea, he was an athlete for the Seoul Metropolitan Subway Corporation's *taekwondo* team. Using this talent, he was able to obtain a U. S. Visa in 1989, and became a permanent resident. In 1991, he became famous by performing a *taekwondo* demonstration at Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles on the opening day of baseball season. A few years later, after he had moved to Killeen for an internship, he began to raise funds for local childhood cancer patients by doing voluntary *taekwondo* activities. Since then, his U. S. *Taekwondo* College in Killeen has taught martial arts to over sixteen thousand people. Establishing a total arts school is his next dream (*The World Korean*, April 13, 2012).

Because of immigrants like Lee, the composition of the local ethnic community in Killeen has changed and matured. Koreans tied to the military still are present, but the city is now attracting immigrants directly from the home country just as do the larger American cities (Maps 96 and 97). The pattern was same for cities adjacent to Fort Riley and Fort Rucker (Maps

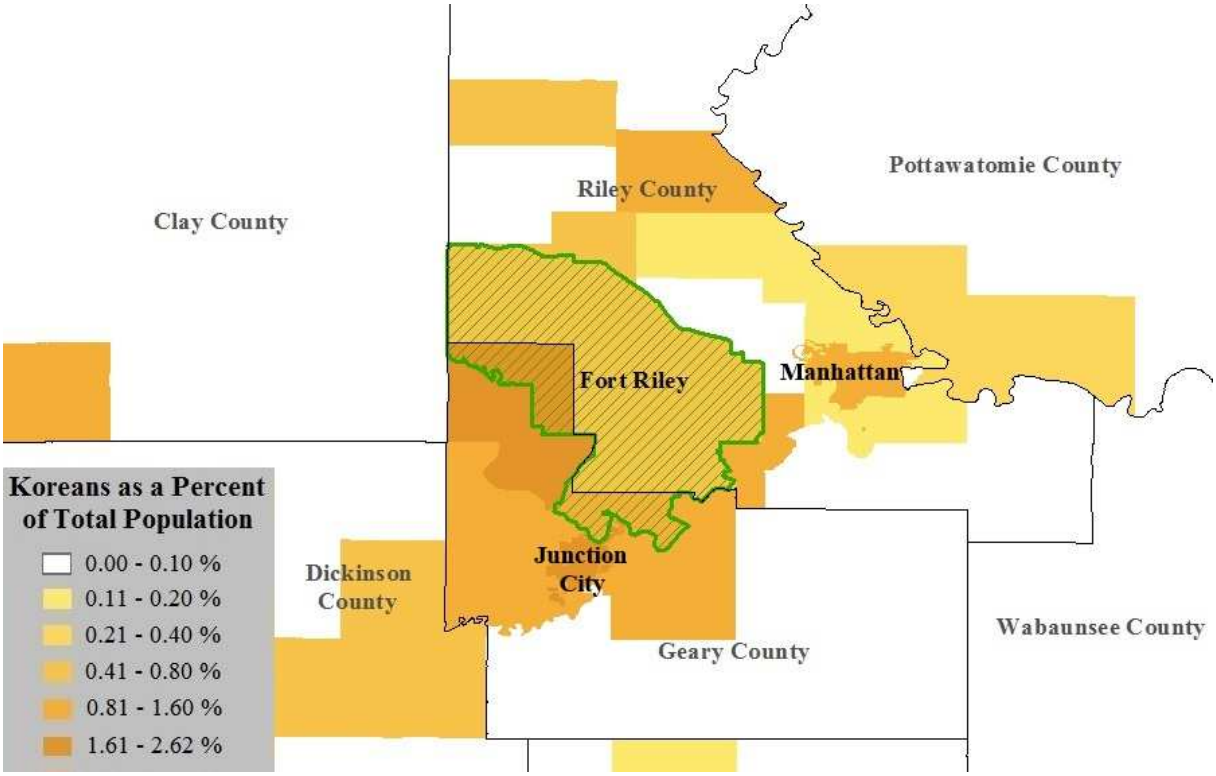
98, 99, 100, and 101).



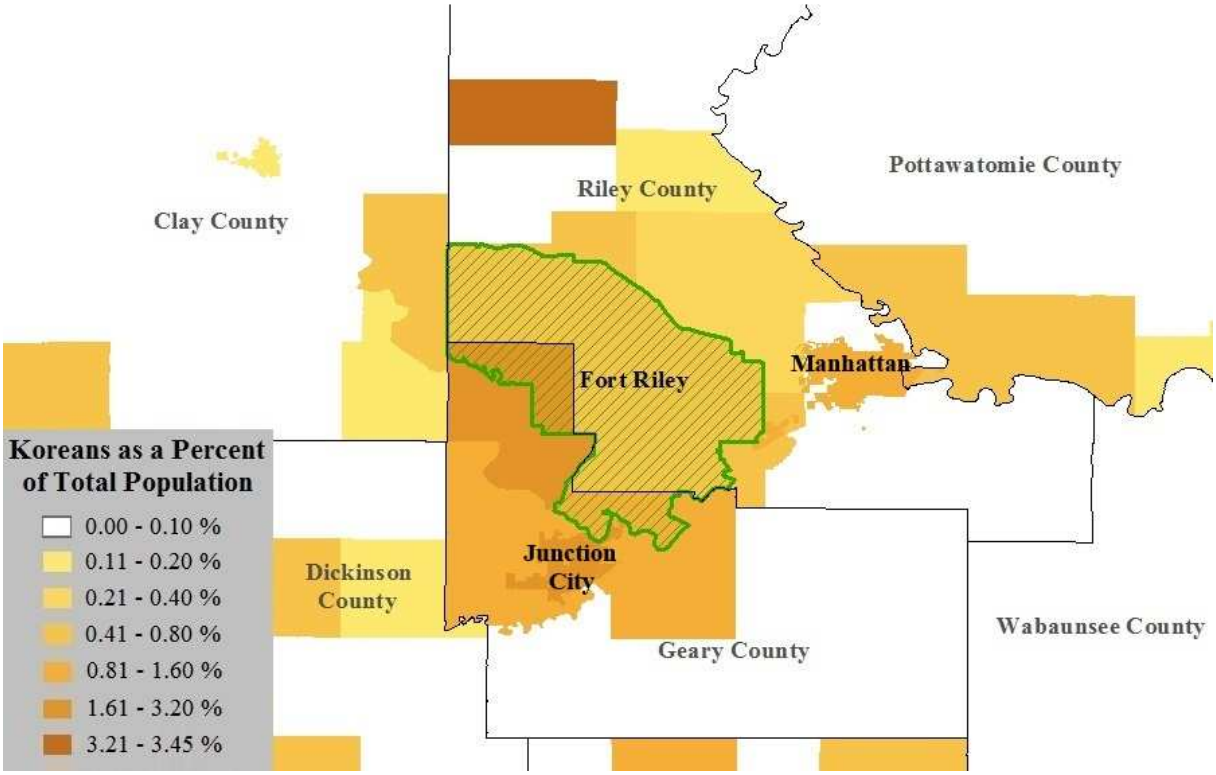
Map 96. Percentage of Population Korean at Fort Hood by County Subdivision, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.



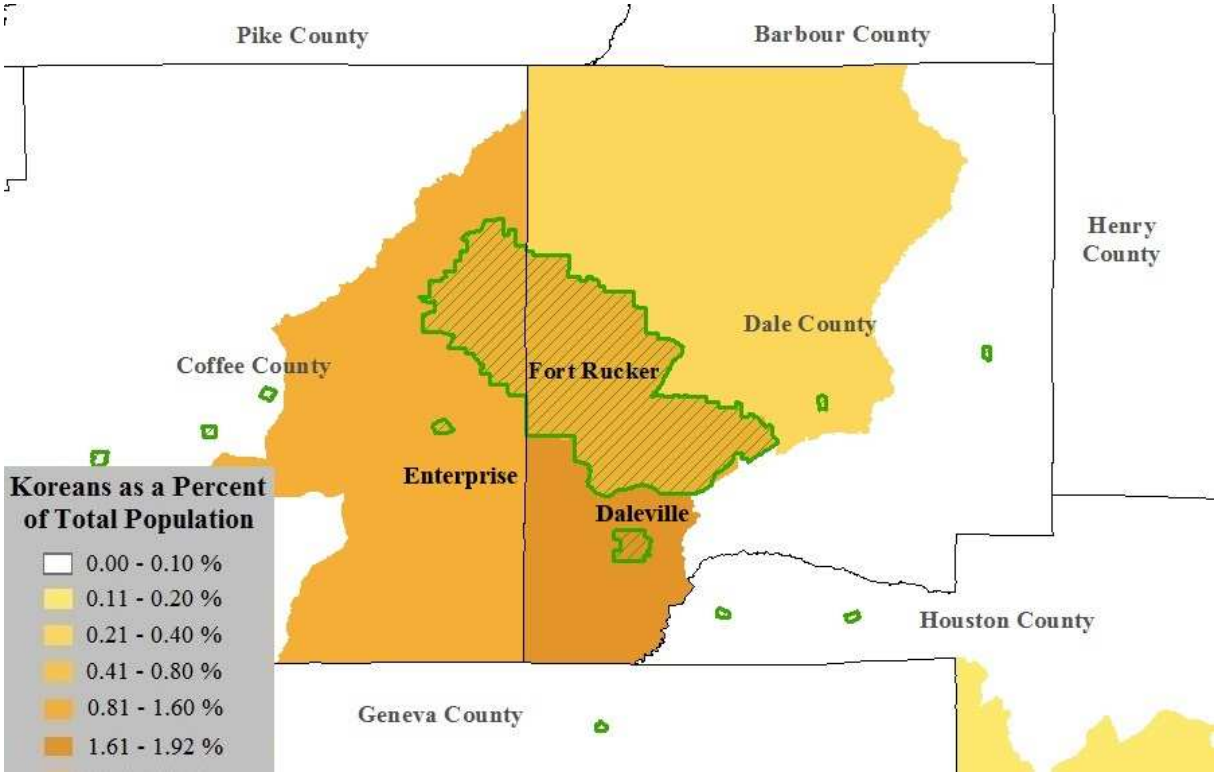
Map 97. Percentage of Population Korean at Fort Hood by County Subdivision, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.



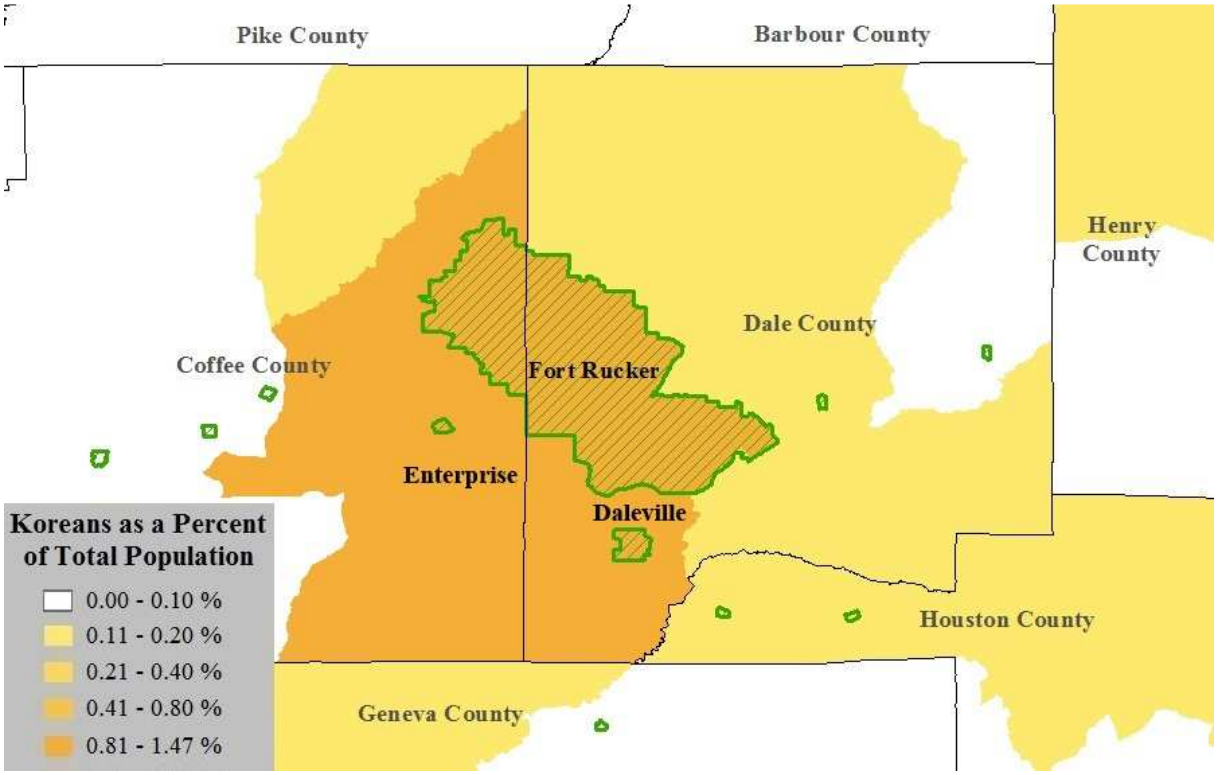
Map 98. Percentage of Population Korean at Fort Riley by County Subdivision, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.



Map 99. Percentage of Population Korean at Fort Riley by County Subdivision, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.



Map 100. Percentage of Population Korean at Fort Rucker by County Subdivision, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.



Map 101. Percentage of Population Korean at Fort Rucker by County Subdivision, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

Although the sizes of the Korean ethnic communities near military bases remain small, their appearances are now similar to ones in major cities. In Killeen, for example, retail and service industries have become popular career choices for local Koreans and a quite large number of women have found jobs in manufacturing (Map 96 and Table 67). A local resident, Dong Soo Kim, said in a newspaper interview in 1991 that some one hundred and thirty Korean-operated businesses existed there at that time including pawnshops, dry cleaners, retail stores, and video shops. Most of these stores carried bilingual signs, again mimicking the practice found in larger places. Luckily, no significant racial tension accompanied this growth (*The Korea Times*, October 28, 1991).

Industry Type	Number			Percentage		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Agriculture	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Construction	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Finance	18	20	38	8.7%	4.0%	5.4%
Manufacturing	8	92	100	3.9%	18.6%	14.2%
Retail	31	107	138	15.1%	21.6%	19.7%
Service	121	241	362	58.7%	48.6%	51.6%
Transportation	14	17	31	6.8%	3.4%	4.4%
Wholesale	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	14	19	33	6.8%	3.8%	4.7%
Total	206	496	702	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 67. Male and Female Koreans Employed by Industry Type in Killeen, Texas, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF4, NPCT085C.

The ethnic communities in military towns have diversified over time and moved beyond pure economic endeavors. New churches have arisen, for example, and indeed such churches are perhaps the most noticeable ethnic establishments in these communities because of their prominent streetside signboards (Photo 46). Most such churches are small, with fewer than one hundred members apiece, but they are abundant. If the local Korean population happened to be too small to operate a building, they held services in one another's homes. Killeen, of course, as one of the largest Korean military towns, has multiple churches, including one on Veterans Memorial Boulevard that used to be a business (Photo 47).

Photo 46. The Grace Korean Church in El Paso, Texas, December 11, 2010. Source: DEMcSee (used with permission).

Photo 47. The Ohnnuri Community Baptist Church in Killeen, Texas, at Veterans Memorial Boulevard and 20th Street, February 25, 2014. Source: Will C. Fry (used with permission).

The Koreans in Junction City near Fort Riley, Kansas, provide a good case study of medium-sized military towns (Maps 98 and 99). One finds several Korean-owned businesses there, especially small retail shops and restaurants. A significant percentage of Korean men and women there also work various in manufacturing industries (Table 68 and Photo 48). When one looks at even smaller military towns such as Daleville, Alabama, near Fort Rucker (Map 100), a majority of the Korean wives still work at the military facilities themselves, often as grocery baggers in the commissary or cashiers at the post exchange (Jeong 2005). Even in these environments, the people have managed to form their own social organizations (Photo 49).

Industry Type	Number			Percentage		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Agriculture	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Construction	0	6	6	0.0%	4.0%	3.1%
Finance	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Manufacturing	17	33	50	41.5%	22.0%	26.2%
Retail	0	25	25	0.0%	16.7%	13.1%
Service	24	80	104	58.5%	53.3%	54.5%
Transportation	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Wholesale	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	0	6	6	0.0%	4.0%	3.1%
Total	41	150	191	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 68. Male and Female Koreans Employed by Industry Type in Junction City, Kansas, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF4, NPCT085C.

Photo 48. A Korean Restaurant in Junction City, Kansas, May 27, 2010. Source: Jim Good (used with permission).

Photo 49. A Korean Community Center at a Strip Mall in Daleville, Alabama, May 17, 2010. Source: Kit Sweeney, https://www.flickr.com/photos/kitsweeney/4681322590/in/faves-122721343@N07/ (used with permission).

Chapter 12

University Towns

Many Korean Americans have had the experience of living in university towns during their early adulthoods. This is because Koreans have been one of the most active ethnic groups to use education as a means to attain U. S. visas. Then, once in the country, a high percentage of these students have found ways to stay permanently. Although they could have enjoyed nice jobs had they returned home with their college degrees, many still preferred staying in America (Hurh 1998, 39). No precise data exist on this subject, but one scholar has estimated that at least a majority of the six thousand Korean students who studied in the U. S. between 1945 and 1965 did not return to Asia (Kim 1971, 26).

Once a Korean national decides to remain in the U. S. after finishing his or her studies, the next goal is to become a permanent resident. Some methods for this are legal and some not, but all have been used continuously by Korean students over the years. The most common (and legal) approach is to obtain a job and then to have employers serve as a sponsor for what is known as resident alien status. Another way is to marry a U. S. citizen (Foner 2001, 177). University graduates who could not meet one of these standards have found subterfuges, the most common of which is to obtain a false proof-of-employment document from a Korean-owned small businesses or church. This normally has been a safe procedure, because few fellow Koreans would report the practice to the police. Eventually, however, even most of the people with falsified documents find ways to become permanent residents, and then U. S. citizens. Regardless of which strategy a student might have employed, no one can deny that they as a group have contributed greatly to the establishment of Korean-American culture. In fact, they

constitute one of the core segments of this society. In this chapter, I discuss this important relationship between Korean immigration and American university towns.

Although many young Koreans in the 1950s and 1960s wanted to study in the U. S., only a small portion of them were lucky enough to find the American sponsors required at that time (Table 69). Yeo Gyeong Yun, a 1955 graduate from high school in Seoul, was one of those few. When still in school, he searched for a sponsor, and after almost two years of effort, found Theral Bishop of Logan, Utah. Bishop had fought in the Korean War as a member of the Utah National Guard and so was sympathetic. Since his hometown was the site of Utah State University, Yun became a student there in 1956. He was a good scholar. Four years later, he earned a Ford Foundation Fellowship for graduate work at Purdue University. There he gained his master's degree and then a Ph.D. in industrial economics (Norberg 1999, 40-43).

Year	China	India	Japan	South Korea	Total World
1949/50		1,359	265	258	26,433
1954/55		1,673	1,673	1,197	34,232
1959/60		3,780	2,248	2,474	48,486
1964/65	5	6,814	3,534	2,604	82,045
1969/70	19	11,329	4,311	3,991	134,959
1974/75	22	9,660	5,930	3,390	154,580
1979/80	1,000	8,760	12,260	4,890	286,340
1984/85	10,100	14,620	13,160	16,430	342,110
1989/90	33,390	26,240	29,840	21,710	386,850
1994/95	39,403	33,537	45,276	33,599	452,635
1999/00	54,466	42,337	46,872	41,191	514,723
2004/05	62,523	80,466	42,215	53,358	565,039
2009/10	127,628	104,897	24,842	72,153	690,923
2012/13	235,597	96,754	19,568	70,627	819,644

Table 69. International Students from Selected Counties Who Studied at U. S. Colleges and Universities, Selected Years: 1949/50-2012/13. Source: Institute of International Education, 2005, 2009, 2010, and 2013d.

Compared to Yun and other students of his generation, younger Koreans who reached college age in the 1980s and later could come to the U. S. much more easily. Sponsorship remained as one option, but other ways also came into existence. South Korea's economy had grown rapidly in the intervening years, and more Korean families could afford to pay the expenses of an American education on their own (Kim 2010). As a result, the South Korean student population in U. S. universities grew rapidly starting in the early 1980s (Table 69). By the early 2000s, such students constituted the third largest foreign national group in American schools, exceeding Japan and trailing only China and India. Considering the total populations of these large Asian countries, the student number for South Korea is very large.

Selecting Universities

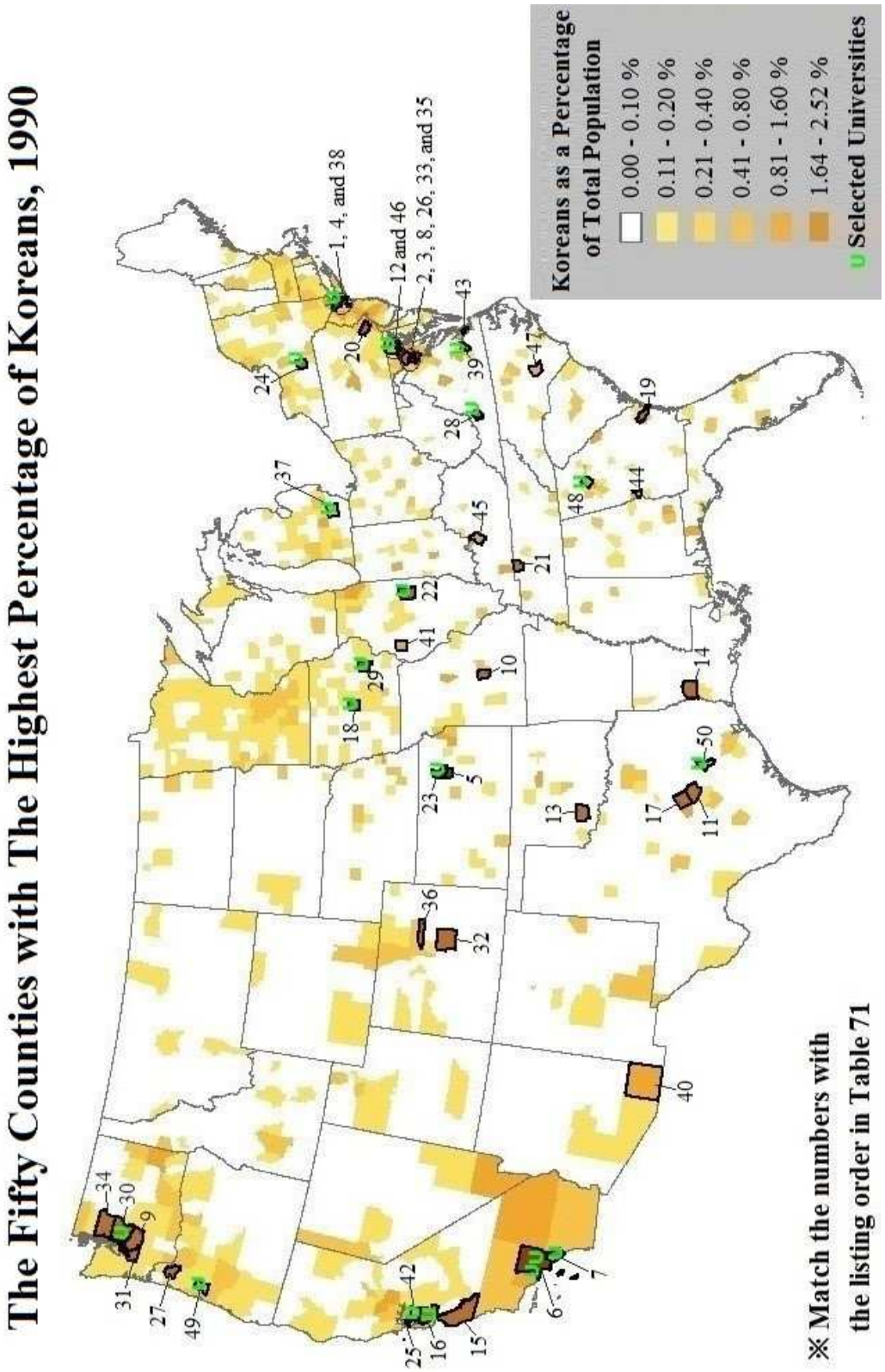
From the time of the Korean War until the 1970s, most Koreans had only minimal general knowledge about the U. S. and even less about American universities. However, information improved as time passed. First, people became familiar with the names of prominent private institutions such as Harvard, Princeton, and Yale by hearing news of their graduates winning Nobel Prizes and being elected to prominent political offices. The names of smaller colleges seldom were in the news. In the past, South Korea offered only small numbers of high-quality jobs that required university degrees. Only graduates from top-ranked universities had a chance for such positions, and so the competition was fierce (Chang 1994, 148). Although Korean students at the time understood that almost all American universities offered quality education, the job scarcity in Korea pushed them to attend the most prominent ones they could. Moreover, these students were very bright and highly motivated, a small group

of people who had been deemed worthy of the costs to study abroad. Plus, in most cases, only top students were able to find sponsors and financial aid to study in the U. S.

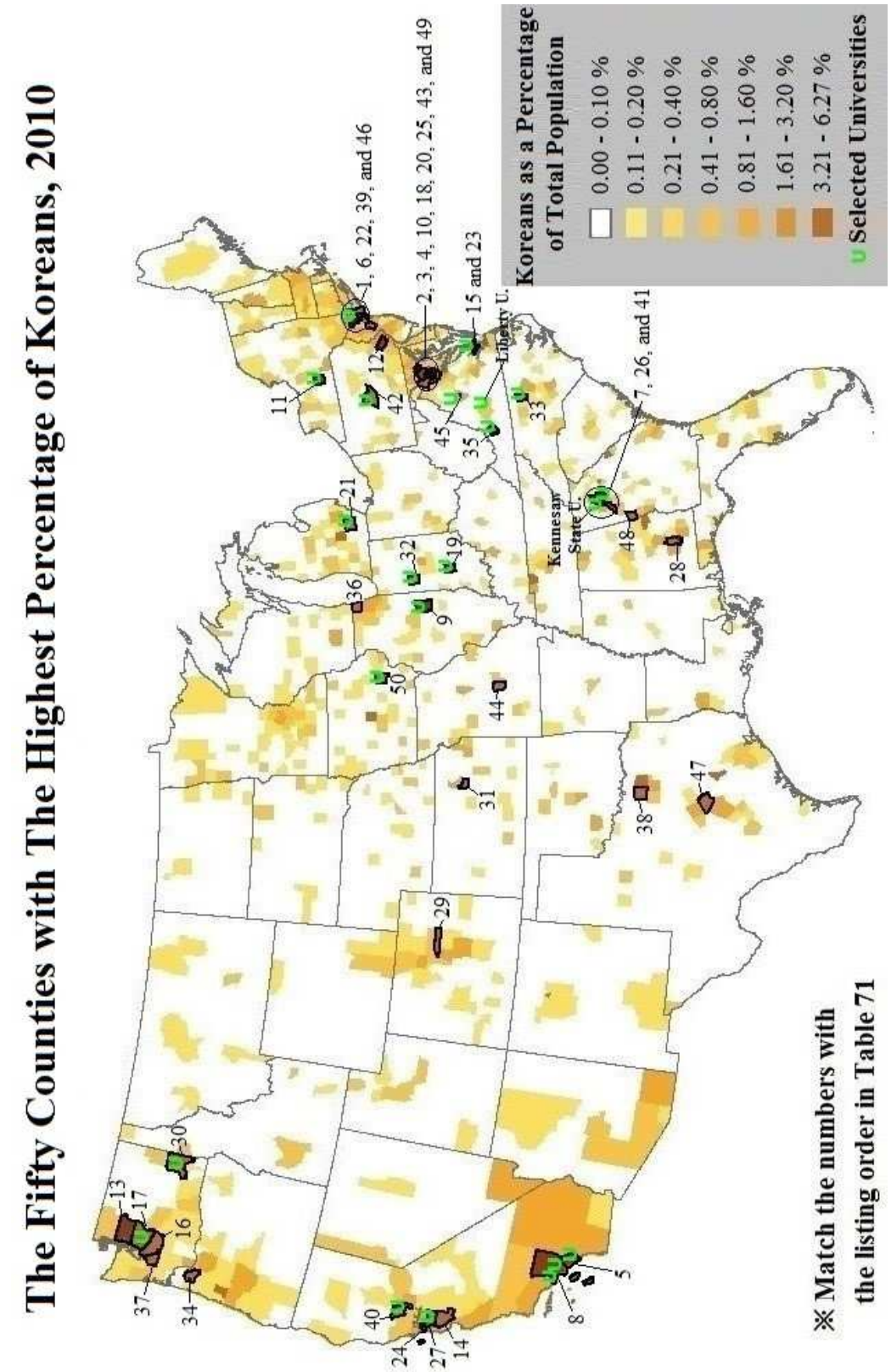
While the popularity of American universities among early Korean students generally coincided with Ivy League schools and other prominent private institutions, exceptions also existed. Some American colleges became known because of the influence of early graduates. For example, George Washington University was the alma mater of South Korea's first president, Syngman Rhee (Kim 1974, 5). In addition, geography played a role. While students who came earlier with sponsors had to attend specific universities, the next generation could choose their own and, in general, selected universities near the major Korean ethnic population centers. Thus, universities in the Northeast, the Midwest, and the West Coast became popular student destinations, much more so than those in the South and Interior West, at least until 1980 (Table 70). By 1990, several college towns in middle section of the country had gained large numbers of Korean students, and this number of towns increased in 2010 (Maps 102 and 103; Table 71). Today, many college towns from the South also are obvious on the maps and the Korean student population is therefore distributed much more evenly throughout the U. S. than it ever has been before. In fact, Korean students are more evenly distributed than the Korean-American population as a whole.

Region	Percentage	
	South Korean	Total Foreign
Midwest	30.3%	21.6%
Northeast	23.0%	19.6%
South	13.5%	21.0%
West Coast	24.4%	22.0%
Western Interior	8.8%	15.2%
Others	0.0%	0.6%
Total United States	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Table 70. Percentage Regional Distribution of South Korean Students within the U. S., 1980/81. Source: Institute of International Education, 1981, Table 5.3.



Map 102. The Fifty Counties with the Highest Percentage of Koreans and Major Universities, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.



Map 103. The Fifty Counties with the Highest Percentage of Koreans and Major Universities, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

	1990			2010		
#	County	Percent Korean	Major Universities	County	Percent Korean	Major Universities
1	Queens, NY	2.5%		Bergen, NJ	6.3%	
2	Fairfax City, VA	2.4%		Howard, MD	4.3%	
3	Fairfax, VA	2.2%		Fairfax, VA	3.8%	
4	Bergen, NJ	1.9%		Fairfax City, VA	3.4%	
5	Geary, KS	1.8%		Orange, CA	2.9%	U. of California, Irvine
6	Los Angeles, CA	1.6%	UCLA, USC	Queens, NY	2.9%	
7	Orange, CA	1.5%	U. of California, Irvine	Gwinnett, GA	2.7%	
8	Montgomery, MD	1.5%		Los Angeles, CA	2.2%	UCLA, USC
9	Pierce, WA	1.3%		Champaign, IL	2.0%	University of Illinois
10	Pulaski, MO	1.3%		Montgomery, MD	1.8%	
11	Bell, TX	1.3%		Tompkins, NY	1.7%	Cornell University
12	Howard, MD	1.3%		Montgomery, PA	1.7%	
13	Comanche, OK	1.1%		Snohomish, WA	1.7%	
14	Vernon, LA	1.1%		Santa Clara, CA	1.6%	Stanford University
15	Monterey, CA	1.0%		York, VA	1.5%	
16	Santa Clara, CA	1.0%	Stanford University	Pierce, WA	1.5%	
17	Coryell, TX	0.9%		King, WA	1.5%	University of Washington
18	Story, IA	0.9%	Iowa State University	Loudoun, VA	1.4%	
19	Liberty, GA	0.9%		Monroe, IN	1.3%	Indiana University
20	Montgomery, PA	0.9%		Falls Church, VA	1.3%	
21	Montgomery, TN	0.9%		Washtenaw, MI	1.3%	University of Michigan
22	Champaign, IL	0.9%	University of Illinois	New York, NY	1.2%	Columbia U., NYU
23	Riley, KS	0.9%	Kansas State University	Williamsburg, VA	1.2%	C. of William and Mary
24	Tompkins, NY	0.9%	Cornell University	San Francisco, CA	1.2%	
25	San Francisco, CA	0.9%		Prince William, VA	1.2%	
26	Prince George, VA	0.9%		Forsyth, GA	1.2%	
27	Washington, OR	0.9%		Alameda, CA	1.2%	U. of California, Berkeley
28	Montgomery, VA	0.9%	Virginia Tech University	Crenshaw, AL	1.1%	
29	Johnson, IA	0.8%	University of Iowa	Arapahoe, CO	1.1%	
30	King, WA	0.8%	University of Washington	Whitman, WA	1.1%	Washington State U.
31	Thurston, WA	0.8%		Geary, KS	1.1%	
32	El Paso, CO	0.8%		Tippecanoe, IN	1.1%	Purdue University
33	Arlington, VA	0.8%		Orange, NC	1.1%	U. of North Carolina
34	Snohomish, WA	0.8%		Washington, OR	1.1%	
35	Alexandria, VA	0.8%		Montgomery, VA	1.1%	Virginia Tech University
36	Arapahoe, CO	0.8%		Lake, IL	1.0%	
37	Washtenaw, MI	0.8%	University of Michigan	Thurston, WA	1.0%	
38	Richmond, NY	0.8%		Denton, TX	1.0%	
39	Colonial Heights, VA	0.8%	Virginia State University	Nassau, NY	1.0%	
40	Cochise, AZ	0.8%		Yolo, CA	1.0%	U. of California, Davis
41	McDonough, IL	0.8%		Fulton, GA	1.0%	Georgia Tech University
42	Alameda, CA	0.7%	U. of California, Berkeley	Centre, PA	1.0%	Pennsylvania State U.
43	Newport News, VA	0.7%		Manassas, VA	0.9%	
44	Chattahoochee, GA	0.7%		Pulaski, MO	0.9%	
45	Hardin, KY	0.7%		Charlottesville, VA	0.9%	University of Virginia
46	Baltimore, MD	0.7%	Johns Hopkins University	Middlesex, NJ	0.9%	
47	Cumberland, NC	0.7%		Bell, TX	0.9%	
48	Gwinnett, GA	0.7%		Troup, GA	0.9%	
49	Benton, OR	0.7%	Oregon State University	Arlington, VA	0.9%	
50	Brazos, TX	0.7%	Texas A&M University	Johnson, IA	0.9%	University of Iowa

Table 71. The Fifty Counties with the Highest Percentage of Koreans and Major Universities, 1990 and 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7 and 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

Starting in the 1980s, opportunists began to establish study-abroad placement agencies in South Korea, and these companies gradually reshaped the pattern of Korean university attendance. The placement agencies in general reflected the preferences of individual Korean parents, and so emphasized a mix of elite private schools and top-level public universities. Sending students to top universities was good not only for parents, but also for the agencies, because as news of success spread from mouth to mouth, it helped the companies to get more customers. The agencies with the best placement records prospered. *Chongro Yuhak*, founded in 1982, is one of the success stories. It is now the largest placement agency in the country, with branch offices in Boston, New York, San Diego, and San Francisco. While this company consults with students individually, it also highly recommends and provides information on a particular list of private and public universities (*Chongro Yuhak* 2014; Tables 72 and 73). Actual student placement data for such an agency is confidential, of course, but it is not difficult to imagine that these lists reflect a pattern of Korean student attendance and aspiration.

After Chongro Yuhak or another agency examines a student's previous academic record and recommends a few schools, location often becomes a key for parents in making a final decision. Recently, preferred locations have changed. While some students and their parents still opt for schools in or near Korean population centers, others now are selecting schools in other locations. The major reason for this change, according to Korean students I have spoken with at the University of Kansas, is that their parents thought that studying in isolated conditions (that is away from major Korean population centers), would help their children to concentrate on their studies. This thinking pattern has become more popular, I think, as increasing wealth in Korea makes it possible for less-than-diligent young people to study in the U. S. now. Finally, a few universities in odd locations also have large numbers of Korean students as a result of

University	Location
American University	Washington, DC
Babson College	Wellesley, MA (Boston Metro)
Boston College	Chestnut Hill, MA (Boston Metro)
Boston University	Boston, MA
Brigham Young University	Provo, UT
Carnegie-Mellon University	Pittsburgh, PA
Columbia University	New York, NY
Dartmouth College	Hanover, NH
Duke University	Durham, NC
Emory University	Druid Hills, GA (Atlanta Metro)
Georgetown University	Washington, DC
Harvard University	Cambridge, MA (Boston Metro)
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Cambridge, MA (Boston Metro)
New York University	New York, NY
Northwestern University	Evanston and Chicago, IL
Rice University	Houston, TX
Southern Methodist University	University Park, TX (Dallas Metro)
Stanford University	Palo Alto, CA
Thunderbird School of Global Management	Glendale, AZ
University of Notre Dame	South Bend, IN
University of Pennsylvania	Philadelphia, PA
University of Rochester	Rochester, NY
University of Southern California	Los Angeles, CA
Washington University	St. Louis, MO
Xavier University	Cincinnati, OH

Table 72. *Chongro Yuhakwon*'s List of Recommended Private Universities. Source: *Chongro Yuhakwon*.

University	Location
Arizona State University	Tempe, AZ (Phoenix Metro)
College of William and Mary	Williamsburg, VA
Indiana University	Bloomington, IN
Michigan State University	East Lansing, MI
Ohio State University	Columbus, OH
Pennsylvania State University	University Park, PA
Purdue University	West Lafayette, IN
University of California, Berkeley	Berkeley, CA
University of California, Davis	Davis, CA
University of California, Irvine	Irvine, CA
University of California, Los Angeles	Los Angeles, CA
University of Florida	Gainesville, FL
University of Georgia	Athens, GA
University of Illinois	Urbana-Champaign, IL
University of Iowa	Iowa City, IA
University of Maryland	College Park, MD (Washington, D.C Metro)
University of North Carolina	Chapel Hill, NC
University of Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh, PA
University of Tennessee	Knoxville, TN
University of Texas	Austin, TX
University of Virginia	Charlottesville, VA
University of Washington	Seattle, WA
University of Wisconsin	Madison, WI

Table 73. *Chongro Yuhakwon*'s List of Recommended Public Universities. Source: *Chongro Yuhakwon*.

special programs established between agencies in South Korea and specific American colleges. I will discuss these later in the chapter.

Early Comers

At the end of the Korean War in 1953, when the U. S. government began to allow South Korean youths to study in American universities, only a few lucky students could find the required financial sponsor and therefore take advantage. One of these was Ilpyong Kim, now an emeritus professor of political science and international relations at the University of Connecticut. Kim was born in 1930 when Korea suffered under Japanese rule and education opportunities were limited. However, he met Ester Laird, an American missionary, and learned English in his youth. Then, the Korean War created a life-changing opportunity. Because of his language ability, Kim was hired as an administrative assistant in the Eighth United States Army. The Americans awarded him a distinguished service medal when the war ended, which helped him to come to the U. S. He attended Asbury University in Kentucky, and after graduating, continued on at Columbia University where he earned a Ph.D. degree in political science. Kim missed his family in Korea, but wanted even more to pursue his academic dreams. Thus, he remained in U. S. where he served some thirty years as a professor (Kim March 13, 2012).

Many of the Koreans who came to America as students in the 1950s and 1960s already had attended universities back in their native country (Table 74). As a result, their ages tended to be older that one might expect and many even had families of their own. An age distribution table of the Koreans in Lawrence, Kansas, the home of the University of Kansas, suggests that this pattern continued at least until 1980 (Table 75).

Country	Percentage			
	Undergraduate	Graduate	Others	Total
China	12.9%	82.7%	4.4%	100.0%
India	21.1%	75.5%	3.4%	100.0%
Japan	61.7%	19.5%	18.8%	100.0%
South Korea	24.1%	69.7%	6.2%	100.0%
Total Foreign	**49.1%**	**44.6%**	**6.3%**	**100.0%**

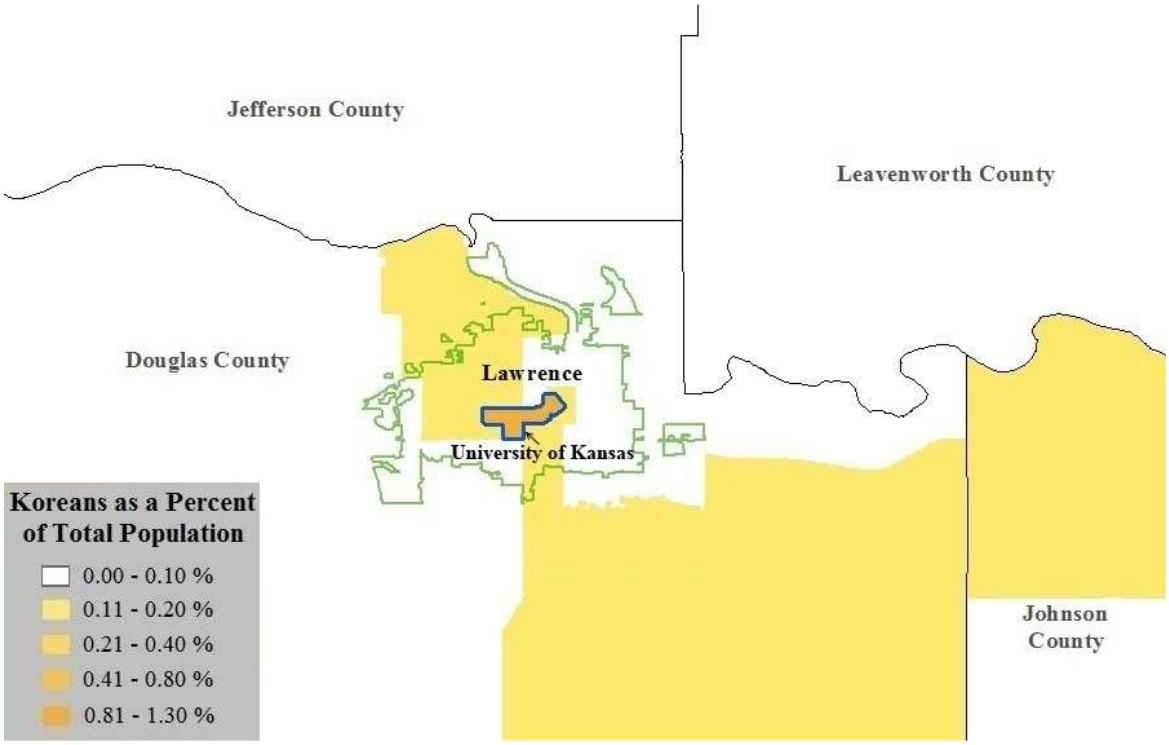
Table 74. Academic Levels of Students at U. S. Schools from Selected Foreign Countries, 1980/81. Source: Institute of International Education, 1981, Table 9.9.

Age	Population			Percentage		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
0-10	16	9	25	25.0%	14.1%	19.5%
11-20	11	11	22	17.2%	17.2%	17.2%
21-30	17	29	46	26.6%	45.3%	36.0%
31-40	15	10	25	23.4%	15.6%	19.5%
41-50	3	2	5	4.7%	3.1%	3.9%
51-60	2	3	5	3.1%	4.7%	3.9%
60+	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	**64**	**64**	**128**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

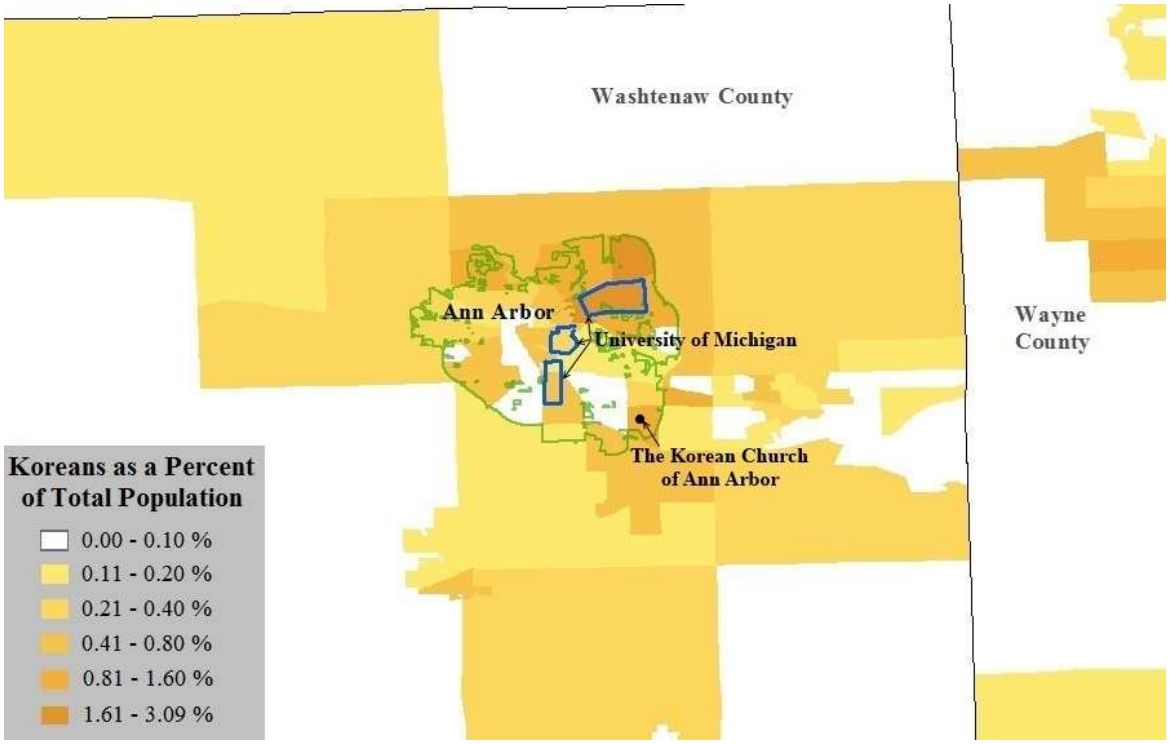
Table 75. Age Distribution of Koreans in Lawrence, Kansas by Sex, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF2b, NTB8B.

As South Korea began to prosper, the flow of its students to America increased rapidly. Almost every university town had received at least some by 1980, but campuses with familiar names led the way. Small Korean communities thereby formed, ones similar to but also different from those ethnic communities located in major cities. Obviously, universities are the focus of students' daily lives, and as a result, they tended to live in or near the campuses. This was definitely true for four case studies I made of Lawrence, Kansas (University of Kansas); Ann Arbor, Michigan (University of Michigan); Chapel Hill, North Carolina (University of North

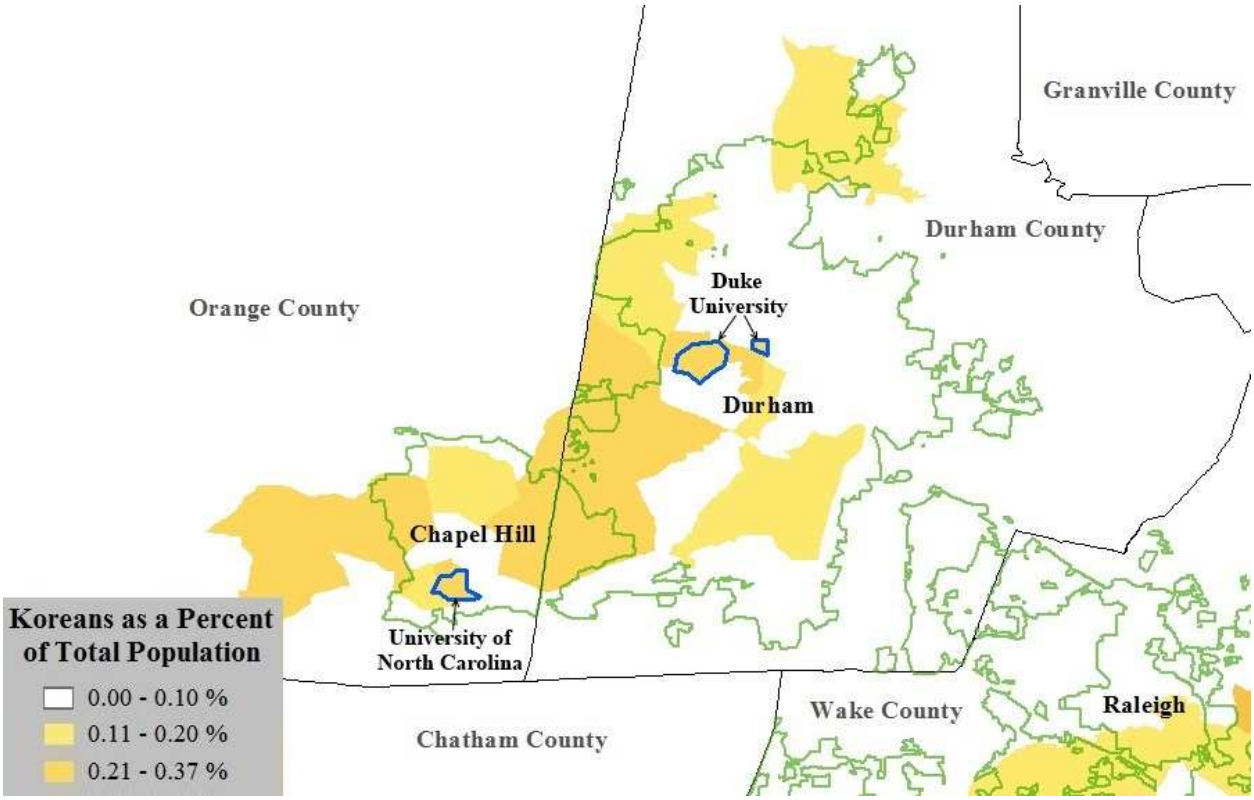
Carolina); and Durham, North Carolina (Duke University) (Maps 104, 105, and 106).



Map 104. Distribution of the Student Korean Population at the University of Kansas, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.



Map 105. Distribution of the Student Korean Population at the University of Michigan, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.



Map 106. Distribution of the Student Korean Population at Duke University and the University of North Carolina, 1980. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1980_STF1, NT7.

Among these university towns, the establishments of Korean communities in Chapel Hill and Durham, North Carolina, were somewhat unusual. As I discussed in chapter 10, not many Korean immigrants went to the South. And, as a result of this regional avoidance, only small numbers of Korean students attended Southern universities in the early years. Even as recently as 1980 the communities that contained Duke University and the University of North Carolina hosted few Korean people (compare Map 106 to Maps 104 and 105). This situation changed as time passed. Duke, because it is the most elite university in the American South, held the earliest attraction for Korean youths. Soon afterward, the nearby University of North Carolina became known. The initial appeal there was its association with the global basketball sensation Michael Jordan. Later, as Koreans read more about this school, they learned that it was one of top public

universities in the U. S. and also had relatively inexpensive tuition rates. Soon, this university also became very popular in Korea (*The Korea Daily*, January 27, 2009 and February 3, 2009).

Korean students in the United States faced two types of adjustments. First, like all immigrants, they had to overcome issues of language and general culture shock. Beyond these things, the academic gap between the U. S. and South Korea also was big back then, and so even highly selected Korean students struggled to keep up with their studies. Social isolation was an even bigger problem for most of them. Before the 1960s, mixing with mainstream American students was not easy for Asians, and some of the early students reported racial barriers. Sometimes they could find other Koreans to befriend, but they often were alone (Abelmann 2009).

Despite their problems, the early Korean students reported that their lives were still better than those of other Korean immigrants at the time. They also knew that they were more fortunate than their cohorts who stayed home in Korea to attend the low quality and extremely strict universities to be found there. Opinions varied, of course, but the general view was that, because the potential opportunities in America were so much greater than in Korea, the chance to study and work in the U. S. was worth almost any sacrifice. Thinking in this way, many students decided to remain in the U. S. after finishing their studies, using both legal and illegal ways to become residents as I have described above (Lee 2008, 170).

Sang-Yong Nam (1934-2011), the founder of the Nam Center of Korean Studies at the University of Michigan, was one of the success stories. He came to the U. S. in 1964 as a student with only four dollars in his pocket. He managed to get a master's degree in city planning two years later and then found work with the Washtenaw County Metropolitan

Planning Commission in Ann Arbor. Saving his money, Nam started his own real estate company in 1974. This prospered, and when it did, Nam repaid his alma mater by endowing its Korean Studies program (*The Nam Center for Korean Studies* 2014).

While Nam did not mention any problems encountered during his early American life, his generation of Korean students and their families often reported difficulties because they often were the first Koreans in their respective college communities. Their situations were not as bad as those of the military brides described in chapter 11, but the two groups were similar that they did not get much help from kinsmen during their adjustment periods. The students were grateful if and when they met other Koreans on campus. Back then, even students who had become permanent residents and/or U. S. citizens tended to stay close to other Koreans if they could because they thought of themselves as culturally Korean more than hybrid Korean Americans as suggested by their legal status (Young 2012, 49).

Following a national trend, the Koreans in university towns also established their own ethnic churches. In Ann Arbor, Michigan, Korean students formed a church in 1967 that had its first meeting on the university's medical campus (Map 105). A few years later, the group bought an inexpensive lot on the southeastern edge of the city and built the church (*The Korean Church of Ann Arbor*, 2014) (Photo 50). More than a decade later, several Korean churches were established in town, all nearer the campus. Probably, the students got richer.

Churches also helped the early Korean students in Lawrence, Kansas, to meet one another. In the early years, these people attended ethnic churches in nearby Kansas City. Then, in February 1988, about twenty of them founded the Korean Presbyterian Church of Lawrence with the help of one of the older Kansas City congregations. Initially, the Lawrence

Presbyterians did not own a building, so they held weekly services in different locations. In 1996, they purchased a land in North Lawrence and built the current church (Photo 51). This

Photo 50. The Korean Church of Ann Arbor in Ann Arbor, Michigan, October 3, 2009. Source: Stephen J. Brown (used with permission).

Photo 51. The Korean Presbyterian Church of Lawrence, Kansas, on Lyon Street, August 26, 2014. Source: Woojin Chang.

location within the city seems odd because most Koreans in Lawrence live south of the Kansas River. The explanation is the relatively inexpensive cost of land in the north (*The Korean Presbyterian Church of Lawrence*, June 2011).

Current Trend

Since the 1980s, as the South Korean economy has grown rapidly, much money has been invested in local schools. These facilities have improved rapidly at all levels, reducing the education gap with the U. S. However, American university graduates are still highly valued in Korea. In fact, one result of the country's economic growth has been even more students wanting to study in the U. S. Now it is not just the smartest students who come but also the children of high-income families. Possibly as a product of this trend, the number of Korean undergraduates in the U. S. (most of whom are financially supported by parents) has increased along with the numbers in other education categories (compare Table 76 with Table 74). Rising undergraduate numbers, of course, have caused the average age of Koreans in American university towns to drop (compare Tables 77 with Table 75). Money probably has affected the popularity of the various majors selected as well. Students supported by their own families would be more likely to study what they really wanted, instead of only higher-paying fields such as computer science or engineering (Table 78).

While many Korean families today can support financially their children's studies in the U. S., collecting the necessary information to make good decisions remains a challenge. This need produced the study-abroad agencies I discussed previously. Such agencies help Korean families not only to select an American educational institution that suits their needs, but also to

Country	Percentage			
	Undergraduate	Graduate	Others	Total
China	39.8%	43.9%	16.3%	100.0%
India	13.2%	56.4%	30.4%	100.0%
Japan	46.6%	20.2%	33.2%	100.0%
South Korea	53.9%	28.2%	17.9%	100.0%
Total Foreign	**41.5%**	**38.0%**	**20.5%**	**100.0%**

Table 76. Academic Levels of Students at U. S. Schools from Selected Countries, 2012/2013. Source: Institute of International Education, 2013b.

Age	Population			Percentage		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
0-10	26	34	60	12.1%	12.1%	12.1%
11-20	44	70	114	20.6%	25.0%	23.1%
21-30	94	118	212	43.9%	42.1%	42.9%
31-40	41	33	74	19.2%	11.8%	15.0%
41-50	5	15	20	2.3%	5.4%	4.1%
51-60	1	4	5	0.5%	1.4%	1.0%
60+	3	6	9	1.4%	2.2%	1.8%
Total	**214**	**280**	**494**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Table 77. Age Distribution of Koreans in Lawrence, Kansas by Sex, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF2, NPCT0003B.

Field of Study	China	India	Japan	South Korea	Total Foreign
Business/Management	29.0%	13.7%	17.4%	16.4%	21.8%
Education	1.7%	0.5%	2.4%	3.1%	2.1%
Engineering	19.2%	35.6%	3.7%	10.8%	18.8%
Fine/Applied Arts	4.9%	1.7%	8.1%	13.4%	5.6%
Health Professions	1.3%	4.7%	2.8%	5.0%	3.8%
Humanities	1.0%	0.5%	5.8%	4.1%	2.1%
Intensive English	3.2%	0.1%	14.6%	4.5%	4.9%
Math/Computer Science	11.2%	23.1%	2.2%	4.9%	9.5%
Physical/Life Sciences	8.8%	11.2%	4.8%	7.0%	8.4%
Social Sciences	8.2%	3.5%	11.5%	12.4%	8.9%
Other	9.0%	4.6%	22.1%	15.1%	11.1%
Undeclared	2.5%	0.8%	4.6%	3.3%	3.0%
Total	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Table 78. Field of Study for Students at U. S. Colleges and Universities from Selected Foreign Countries, 2012/2013. Source: Institute of International Education, 2013a and 2013c.

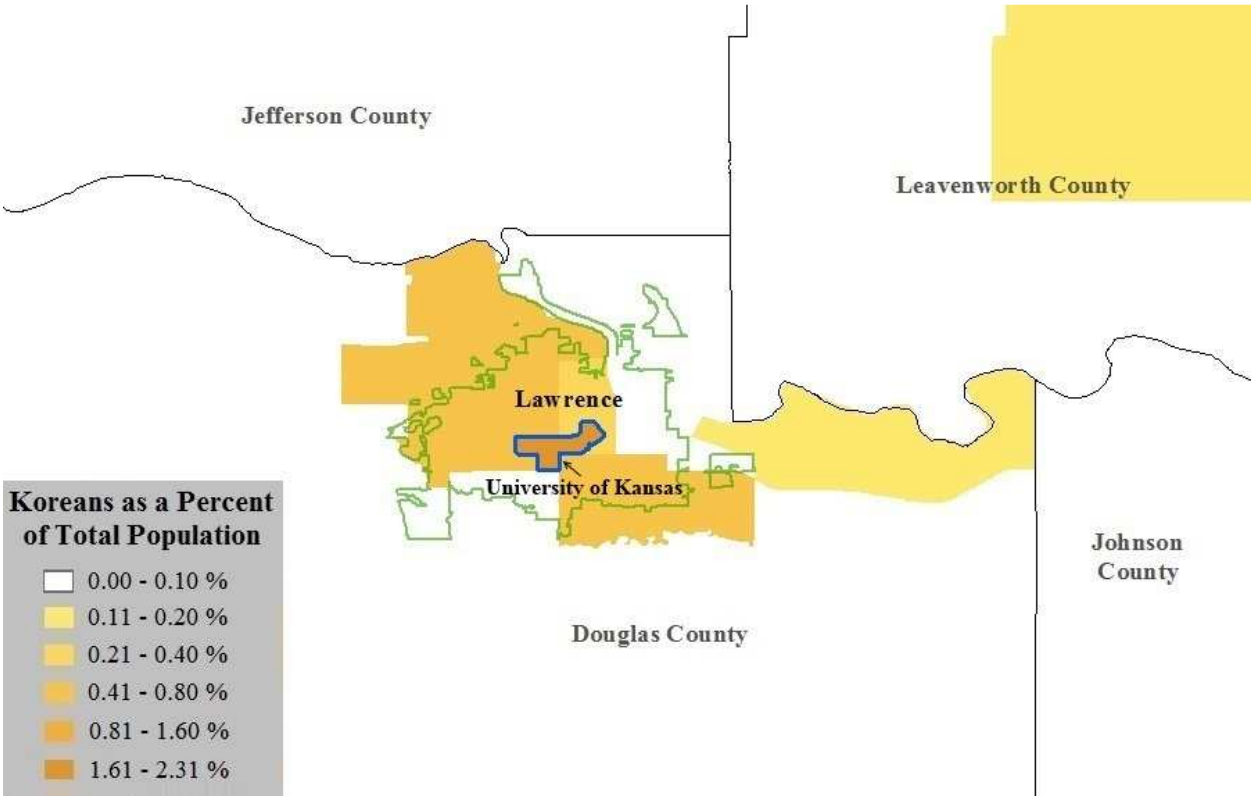
complete application paperwork. Most of these agencies are independent, but some of them scout students for particular American universities. In fall 2011, I interviewed for a student recruiter position at one such business in Seoul. I was shocked when I read the job description, because rather than matching students with schools well suited for them, the aim was to send students only to Valdosta State University in Georgia. Later, I learned that many agencies such as this exist in Korea. As a result, several mid- and low-level American universities such as Kennesaw State University (Kennesaw, GA) and Liberty University (Lynchburg, VA) now enroll abnormally large numbers of Korean students. In at least a few cases, such institutions also hire Korean-speaking faculty members (Map 103). The University of North Georgia, for example, advertised for this language skill as part of a geography assistant professor position in December 2013 (*Vitae*, December 20, 2013).

Today's Korean students in the U. S. live much better than such students in the past. Many now own cars, for example, and live in off-campus housing. As a result, their population distribution within university towns is becoming decentralized. In Lawrence, Kansas, for example, the Korean presence in off-campus locations has grown continuously over the years (Table 79). During the 1980s and 1990s, areas near campus grew fastest, but after 2000 the biggest growth occurred in the southwestern part of the city near Clinton Lake (Maps 107, 108, and 109). This change has been caused by the construction of new apartment complexes and townhouses in the Clinton area together with the preference of many Korean students for such amenities. Sometimes, these students have asked me how I could live on campus for the entire eight years I have been in Lawrence. I tell them that I like the convenience of being close to classes, but clearly my opinion was an outlier among all Korean students. The pattern of decentralization is occurring in other university towns as well. One certainly can see it in Ann

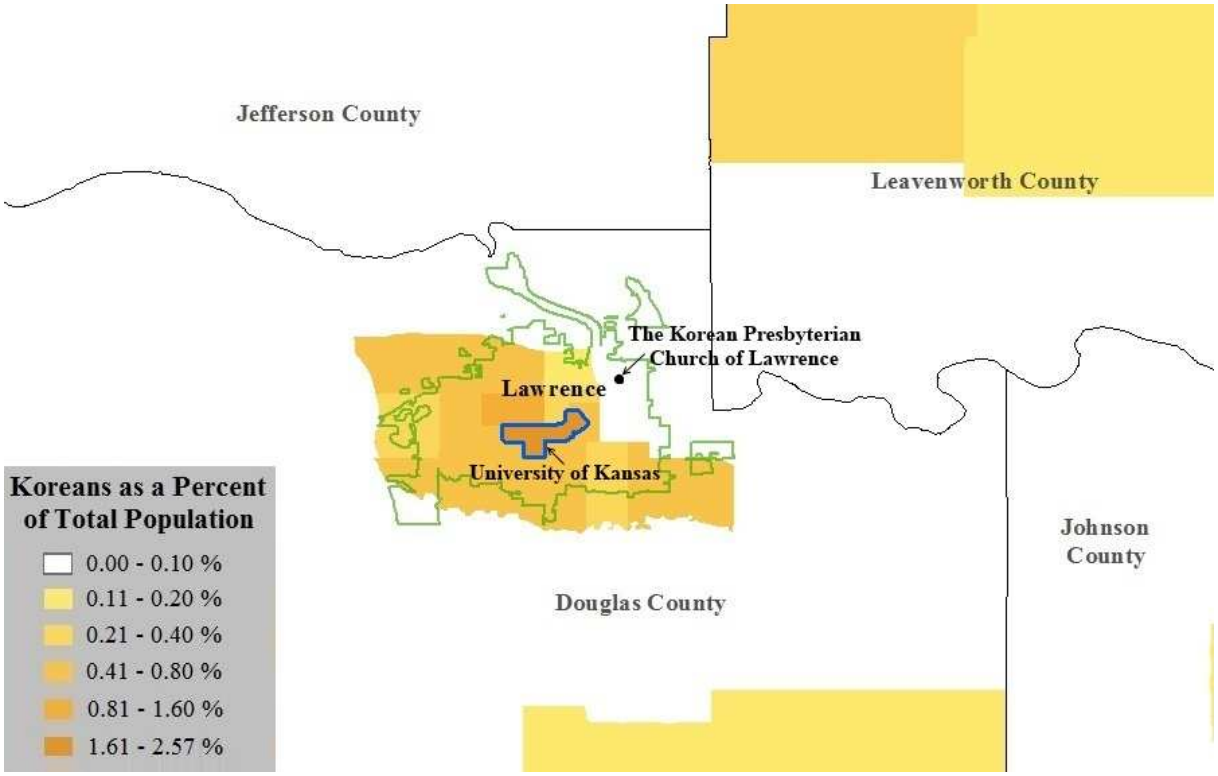
Arbor, Michigan, and in Chapel Hill and Durham, North Carolina (Tables 80, 81, and 82; Maps 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, and 115).

Year	University of Kansas Campus	Lawrence	Douglas County
1980	73	129	147
1990	113	327	340
2000	153	494	506
2010	111	643	681

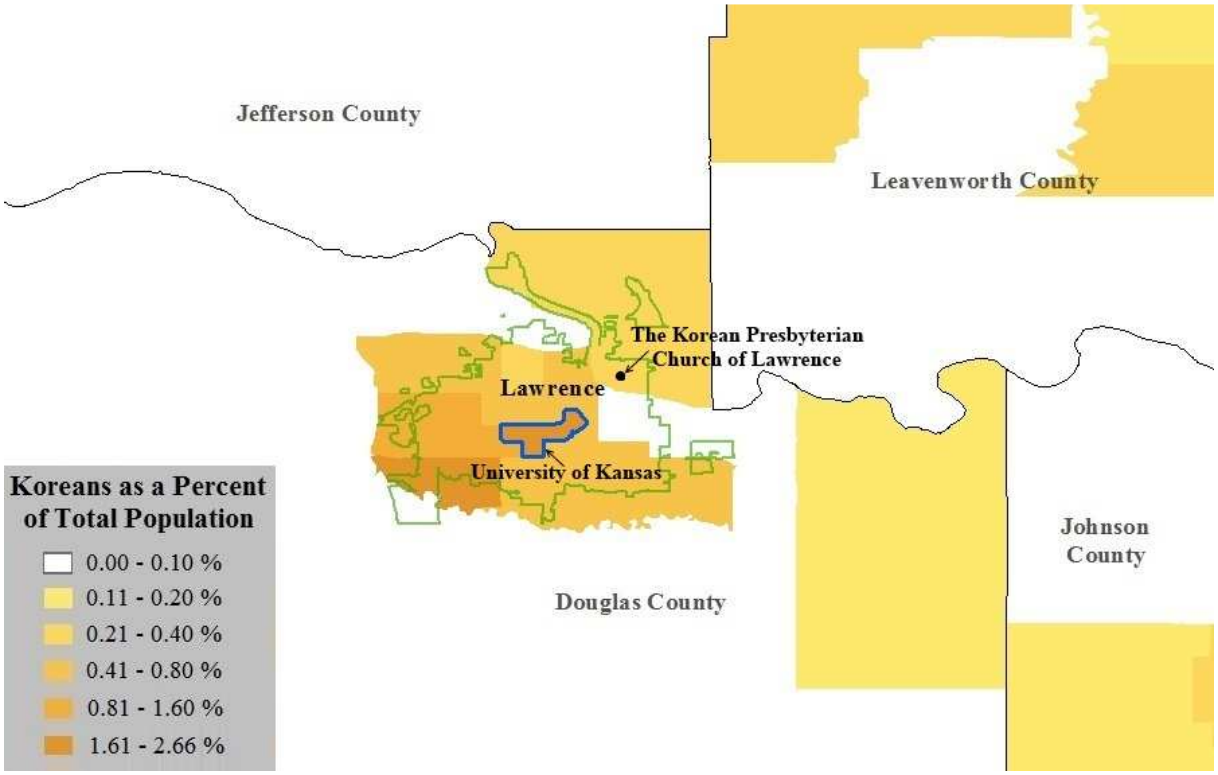
Table 79. Korean Populations on the University of Kansas Campus and in the City of Lawrence and Douglas County, Kansas, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1, 1980_STF1, NT7, 1990_STF1, NP7, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B, and 2010_SF1b, PCT7.



Map 107. Distribution of the Student Korean Population at the University of Kansas, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.



Map 108. Distribution of the Student Korean Population at the University of Kansas, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.



Map 109. Distribution of the Student Korean Population at the University of Kansas, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

Year	University of Michigan Campus	Ann Arbor	Washtenaw County
1980	285	711	926
1990	815	1,701	2,201
2000	1,094	2,581	3,697
2010	904	3,159	4,853

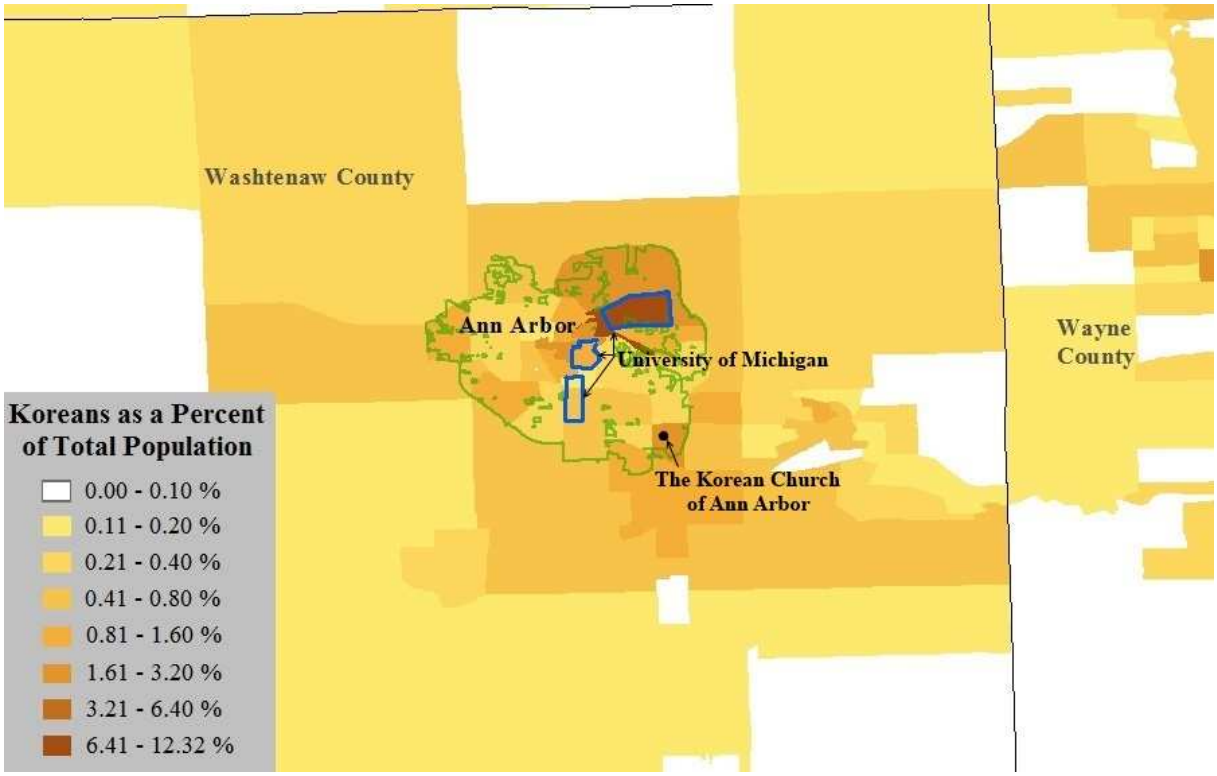
Table 80. Korean Populations on the University of Michigan Campus and in the City of Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County, Michigan, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1, 1980_STF1, NT7, 1990_STF1, NP7, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B, and 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

Year	Duke University Campus	Durham	Durham County
1980	22	83	137
1990	117	308	351
2000	185	695	751
2010	69	1,146	1,232

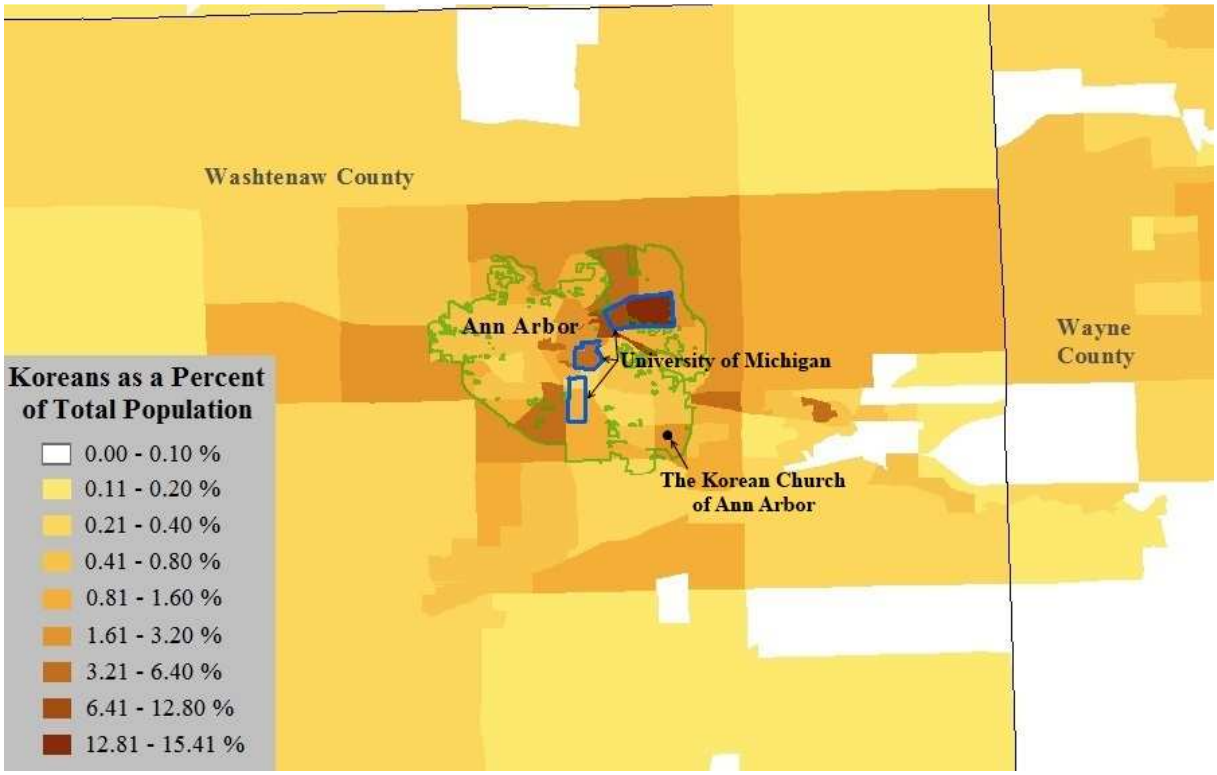
Table 81. Korean Populations on the Duke University Campus and in the City of Durham and Durham County, North Carolina, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1, 1980_STF1, NT7, 1990_STF1, NP7, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B, and 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

Year	University of North Carolina Campus	Chapel Hill	Orange County
1980	25	83	85
1990	104	269	351
2000	165	575	795
2010	199	1,377	1,644

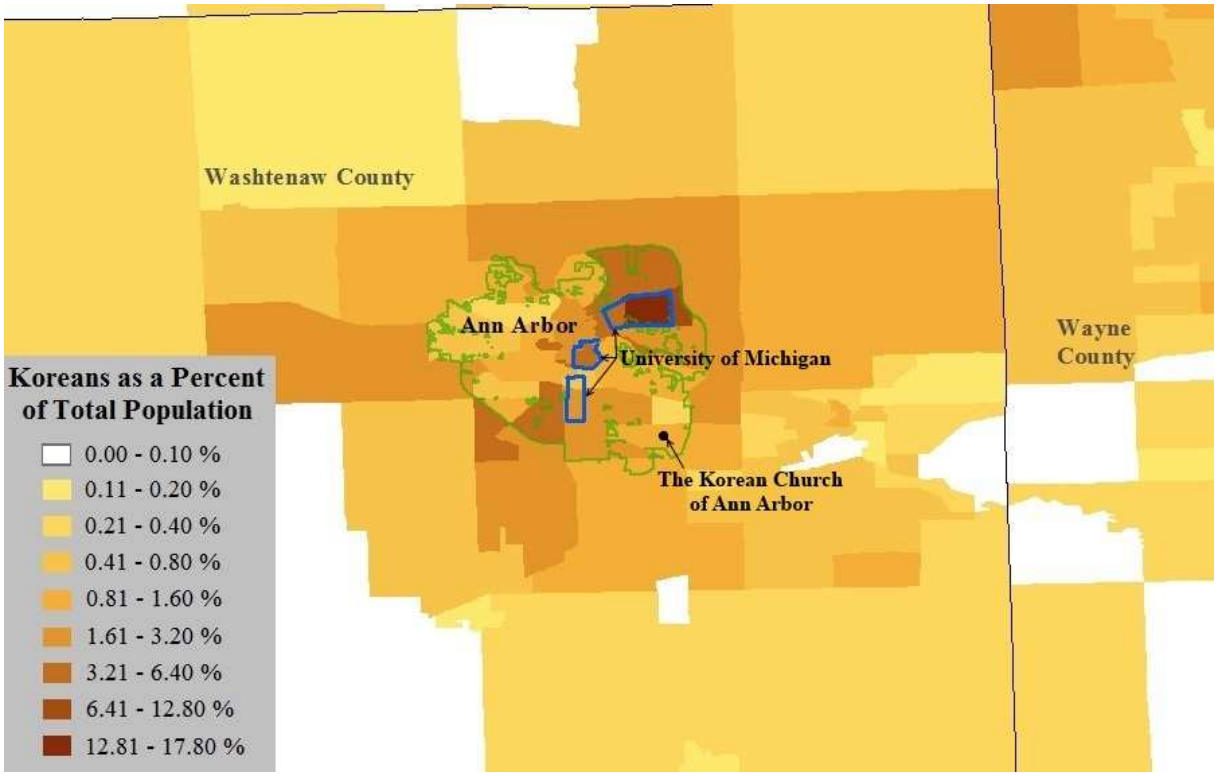
Table 82. Korean Populations on the University of North Carolina Campus and in the City of Chapel Hill and Orange County, North Carolina, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1970_Cnt 2, NT1, 1980_STF1, NT7, 1990_STF1, NP7, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B, and 2010_SF1b, PCT7.



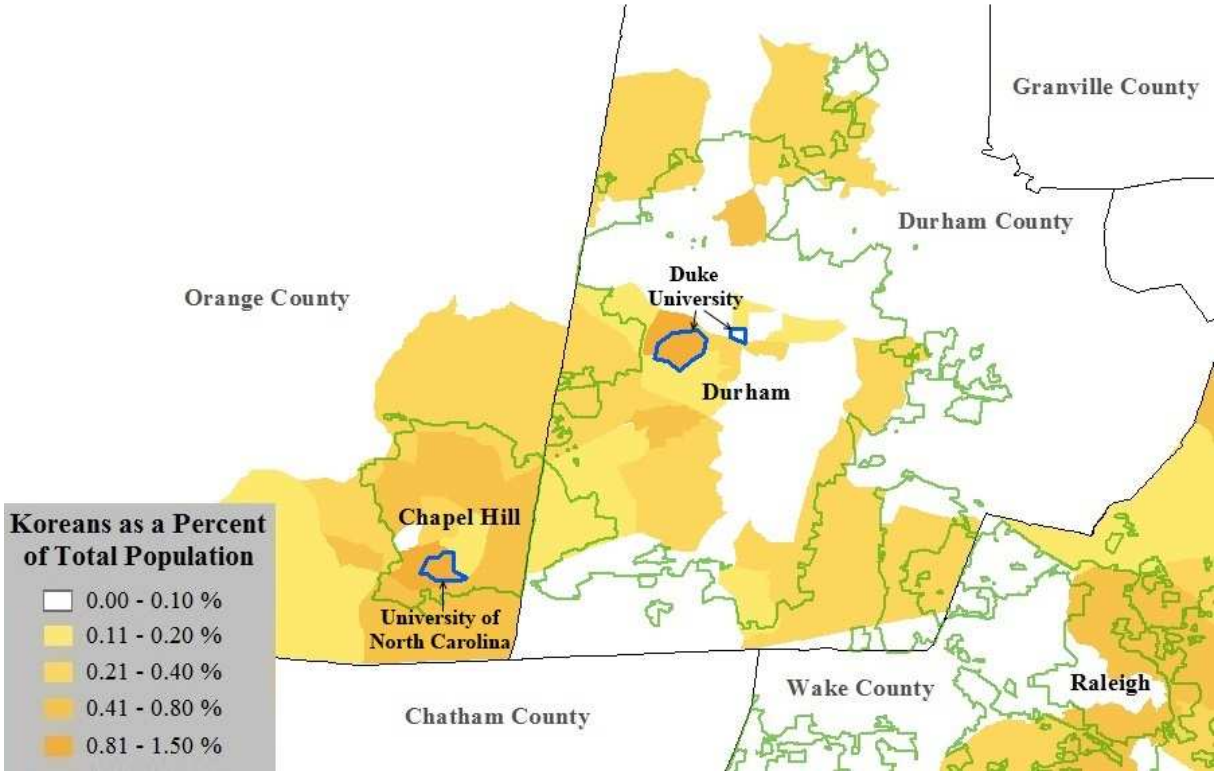
Map 110. Distribution of the Student Korean Population at the University of Michigan, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.



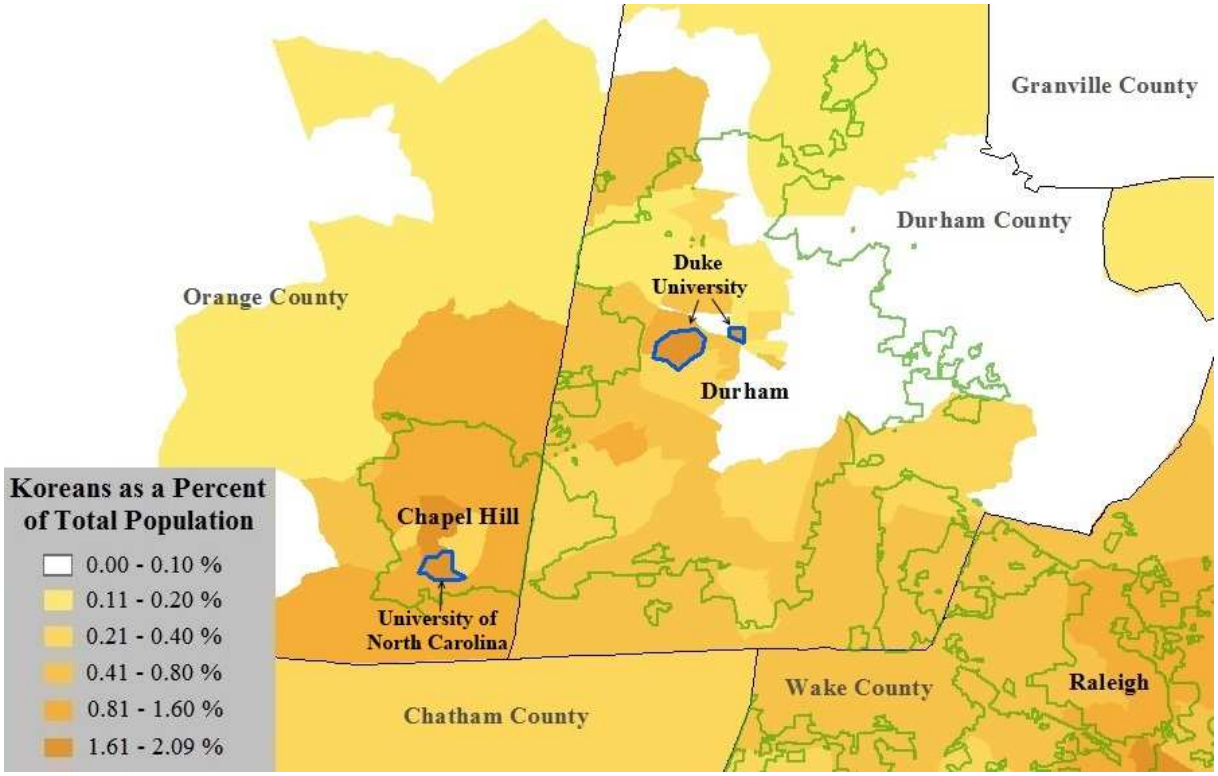
Map 111. Distribution of the Student Korean Population at the University of Michigan, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.



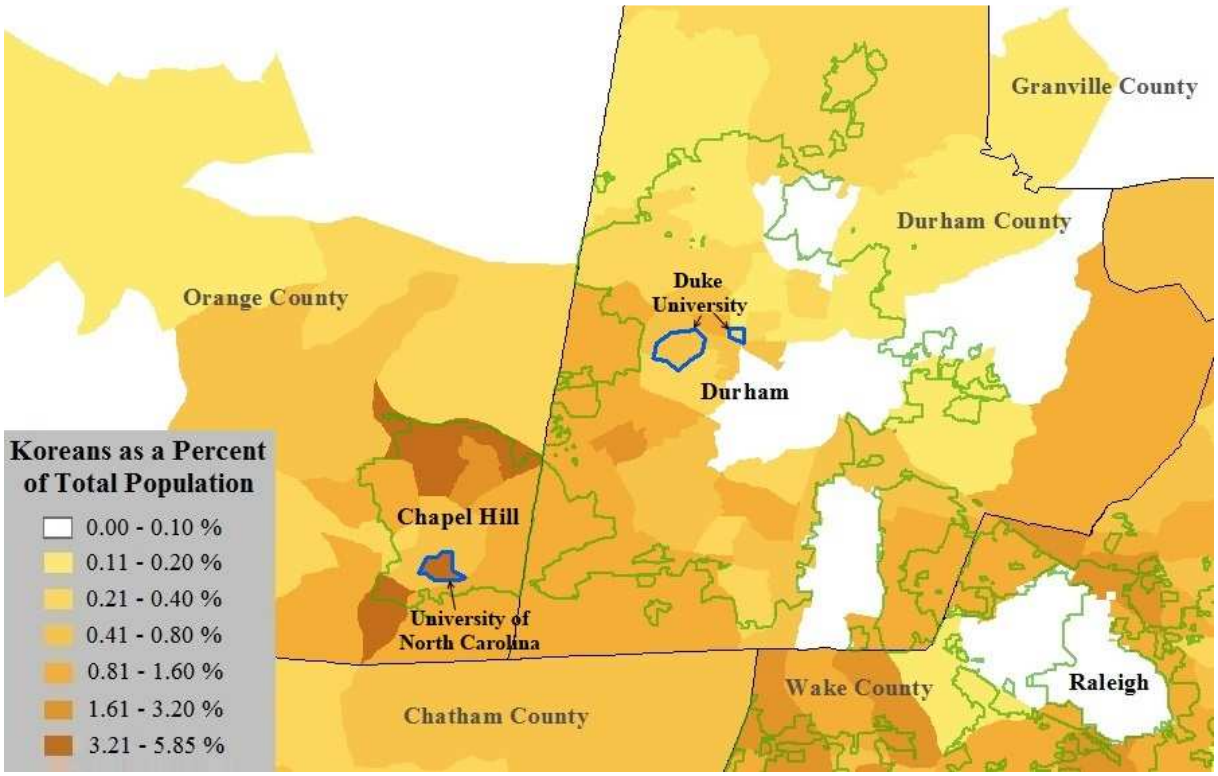
Map 112. Distribution of the Student Korean Population at the University of Michigan, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.



Map 113. Distribution of the Student Korean Population at the Duke University and at the University of North Carolina, 1990. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 1990_STF1, NP7.



Map 114. Distribution of the Student Korean Population at Duke University and at the University of North Carolina, 2000. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2000_SF1a, NPCT007B.



Map 115. Distribution of the Student Korean Population at Duke University and at the University of North Carolina, 2010. Source: National Historical Geographic Information System, 2010_SF1b, PCT7.

Living away from campus carries with it negative as well as positive impacts. Some Korean students have lost interest in their studies and the resultant drop in overall academic achievement level is now a major issue for the entire Korean university community. Samuel S. Kim's recent doctoral research shows that forty-four percent of Korean students who attended fourteen top American universities, including Harvard, Princeton, and Yale, between 1998 and 2007 dropped out (Kim 2008). As I mentioned earlier, not only top students but also a large number of average ones now attend American universities. Their parents badly want them to attend top universities and so often send them to private tutoring institutions. The help received at such places for studying for the SAT exam and writing application papers enabled some otherwise mediocre students be admitted into the top universities that their parents liked. And, as one might predict, many of these students could not survive at such universities because there they had to do their studies by themselves (Schwartzman, October 14, 2008).

Chapter 13

Conclusion

Immigration from Korean to the U. S. started over a century ago but significant Korean-American communities were established only after 1965, the year the U. S. Congress passed a new immigration bill that abolished the ethnic-based quota system that had been in place since 1924 (LeMay and Barkan 1999, 251-263). The new law made it much easier for Asians to relocate, but because the process still was costly, educated professionals were the first to migrate. A majority of these people settled in major cities, especially on the West Coast, in the Northeast, and along the Great Lakes. In addition, smaller Korean groupings came to exist at U. S. military bases via servicemen taking Korean wives and at university towns via exchange students.

Because of historical connections and geographical closeness, the largest Korean communities emerged in West Coast cities. A substantial number of Koreans who settled there experienced economic success, mostly by operating small businesses. They also encountered racial conflict, especially with African Americans. In April 1992, a large racial riot broke out in Los Angeles. Many businesses were destroyed, and in its aftermath, the Korean-American community began to change their attitudes. In general, the people became more conservative politically, lost much of their faith in small business, and suburbanized.

Major cities in the northeastern U. S. hosted the second largest concentration of Korean immigrants. These people, while similar to Korean immigrants elsewhere in most ways, included many health professionals who had re-immigrated from West Germany after that country expelled them during an economic recession in the 1970s. The East Coast ethnic communities grew parallel to the ones in the West, but managed to avoid episodes of serious

violence with their neighbors. Smaller Korean-American communities were established in major Midwestern and Southern cities. Among those, industrial centers along the Great Lake gained ethnic populations first, and then communities in the South as a result of that region's new Sun Belt image and Atlanta hosting the Summer Olympics of 1996. Because of smaller numbers, the Korean experiences in the Midwest and South were somewhat different from those on either coast. Although these migrants to the nation's interior struggled more during the early years because of an absence of kinsmen to provide help, they also tended to be more interactive with non-Korean local residents.

Beyond the cities, the biggest concentrations of Koreans occur in military towns across the U. S. The largest portion of these people are wives of U. S. military servicemen. Such women traditionally have been looked down upon by Korean and Korean-American societies alike. As a result, they have suffered physical and mental isolation. The other Koreans in military towns are the racially mixed children between the Korean women and their husbands. Many such children have grown up without much knowledge of their Korean roots, but others have shown interest in learning their Asian heritages.

Finally, Korean ethnic communities have been established in different university towns across the county. Although most Koreans did not intend to settle in such places permanently, their experiences there were valuable because this was often their first taste America in life. Among the academic communities, the ones in big cities became part of greater urban ethnic communities, while the ones in smaller places were more isolated.

The experiences of Korean immigrants to the U. S. generally have been similar to those of other recently arrived Asian groups. A majority of all these peoples came to America after

1965 and did so primarily in hopes of bettering their economic futures. Also, most of them came from urban backgrounds and sought new homes in major American cities.

However, Korean Americans were also a special group in several ways and established a number of major trends for Asian-American society as a whole. First, Koreans were the first major Asian ethnic group to utilize family ties built between American military men and their foreign wives to initiate an increased immigration flow from Asia to the U. S. Even though a large number of Japanese brides and their children had come to the U. S. earlier in the aftermath of World War II, this immigration did not initiate a chain migration of Japanese people after immigration restriction to the U. S. loosened in 1965. This contrast in behavior is probably a result of differences in the postwar economic conditions of the two countries. Japan's economy by the 1960s had recovered quickly, in part because of larger aid from the U. S. South Korea's infrastructure, on the other hand, was badly damaged during its war, leaving the people extremely poor and without much hope for a fast recovery. The prospect of using family ties via military husbands as a way to escape bad conditions at home therefore had appeal, and so Koreans eagerly took advantage of the new 1965 U. S. immigration law. The Koreans, in turn, became the model for the big flow of Asian military spouses and families to the U. S. started in 1975 by a hundred thousand South Vietnamese refugees after another American war on that continent.

Although most recent Asian immigrant groups in the U. S. have been active in operating their own small businesses, Koreans also set the standard in this practice. They even carried it to an extreme. As family after Korean family made their American dreams come true via the path of business ownership, they simultaneously acquired an image of greed much the same as did

Jews in nineteenth-century Europe. Such single-minded success also angered neighbors, of course, especially African Americans in Los Angeles, and led to a major riot in 1992.

Related to the obsession with small business, a third distinctiveness of the Korean immigrant experience in the U. S. concerns their drive to find optimal sites for business opportunity. As I detailed in chapter 7, Koreans was significantly more active than the Chinese or Japanese populations in moving to places where economic opportunities were available. This tendency continues to the present and has created a distribution pattern for Korean Americans that now closely mirror that of urban America in general.

Education is still another element that distinguishes Koreans from other major recent immigrant groups in the U. S. Even though the general idea of having its students study in America and often remain there to become U. S. citizens does not make Korea unique, Koreans showed exceptional enthusiasm toward American education, especially right after 1965. As South Korea's economy changed from one of the poorest in the world to one of the most elite, its appetite for American education never diminished (Table 69). For Koreans and Korean Americans alike, education has been one of their top priorities, probably second only to economic advancement. Having their sons and daughters be top students in school seems to mean more for Korean parents than it does for other ethnic groups. Sometimes, of course, this focus goes too far, leading to anxiety for students and inattentiveness to other important things. One result was the shooting at Virginia Tech University discussed in chapter 9.

The early stages of Korean immigration to America fit well with the model proposed by Everett S. Lee in "A Theory of Migration" (1966). Like Lee argued, four major factors (push factors from the area of origin, pull factors from the area of destination, intervening obstacles,

and personal reasons) underlie trans-Pacific migration. Bad economic conditions in Korea were the major push factor in the 1960s and 1970s while the good economic opportunities and social conditions in America acted as a pull. These two factors already existed in the 1950s, of course, but only when a racially based U. S. immigration law was abolished in 1965 could the mass Korean immigration to the U. S. begin. And even more important, the personal dreams and problems of individuals determined the actual decisions to relocate.

Still, the life experiences of Korean Americans cannot be explained by any one theory. According to Michael Omi and Howard Winant's analysis of racial formation, for example, all nonwhite ethnic communities supposedly pass through only the first three of the four steps of the model of immigrant life proposed by sociologist Robert E. Park in the 1920s: contact, conflict, accommodation, assimilation (Omi and Winant 1986). Whereas Omi and Winant insist that nonwhite groups could not complete the final assimilation step because of racism and discrimination, a quite large portion of Korean Americans have worked very hard to fit into the mainstream of American life by adapting new lifestyles and actively interacting with other Americans. I would go so far as to argue that Korean-American society as a whole fits the older theory of Robert E. Park better than it does the newer model of Omi and Winant. While other ethnicity theories such as the identity change model in Ronald A. Reminick's *Theory of Ethnicity* (1983) and the relationship model in John Rex and David Mason's *Theories of Race and Ethnic Relations* (1986) can perhaps help to explain specific groups of Korean-Americans in specific places, no single theory can truly account for the entire Korean-American community. Therefore, I suggest that future studies on any ethnic group should include both national trends and local case studies.

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